MOSCOW CORRESPONDENT

By

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TO
V. M. G.

INTRODUCTION

MY story, which is that of the Soviet peoples' struggle for recovery, begins on the day they celebrated their victory over Germany. In the following pages I shall try to describe the Russia I have seen, leaving it to the reader to draw his own conclusions as to whether the moves of the Soviet Government in international affairs are the result or the cause of events at home. He will be disappointed if he expects to find a key to the "Russian enigma," but he may find it easier to understand and, possibly, to sympathize with, the Soviet people by reading of some of the ways in which they are facing problems that, in varying degrees, confront the peoples of all countries in the post-war period. Whether the successes that are attending their efforts to liquidate the material and moral consequences of the war are to be attributed to wise leadership or to the virtues of the people governed, he must answer for himself. Nor have I sought to provide an answer to the question whether the kind of society that is being built here is going to be compatible with that which is emerging in other parts of the world, although the people of the Soviet Union are being educated in the spirit that it is, and those of some other lands that it is not.

This book, in short, attempts to do little more than describe the Soviet scene as it has appeared in its changing shape and varying colours to a foreign observer who has had no more, or no less, opportunity of hearing the Soviet point of view and of examining it in the light of observed facts

than anybody else given the privilege of living among a people engaged in freeing itself from want and hunger by its own unaided strength. I have seen something of the efforts of other peoples of Eastern Europe and of the British people to pull themselves up by their shoe-strings from the disastrous position in which they have been placed by the errors of their former rulers and the cost of war, and I have seen the retribution that has fallen on the people of Germany for their criminal blindness, but I have not sought to draw comparisons or to make recommendations. Where the cap fits let it be worn. But though for a multitude of reasons the Soviet solution of its problems is peculiar to local conditions, there is, I think, a lesson to be learned, and inspiration to be drawn from certain aspects of the reconstruction programme by people everywhere faced with similar problems of providing themselves with work, food, homes and spiritual sustenance. It is on these problems that I have dwelt, for unless they are solved, in Soviet Russia as elsewhere, other aspects of life, no less essential to the welfare of mankind are doomed to disappear or to be cut off as they emerge. There can be no liberty of the spirit while man remains a slave to abject poverty.

Try as hard as they can, it is well nigh impossible for people in lands that have not been fought over and occupied to grasp the scale of the hardships born by the individual Russian during the war. Conditions had been such in the pre-war years that very few had been able to accumulate more than the most modest possessions, and when victory came, everything had been consumed. The furniture had been used to feed the little stoves. School children wrote their exercises in copy-books made of old newspapers. In winter, the office-workers sat in their overcoats. Large cities like Smolensk and Kiev were without electric light or tap-water. Over areas the size of France the factories stood idle or in ruins. There were large farms where only women worked. Peasants stood in markets from dawn to dusk with three or four eggs to sell. The trains ran ten miles an hour. With eyes smudged with fatigue, shabby, speechless, people dragged themselves slowly to work.

During the three years that have passed, improvement has been rapid. Before the Reconstruction Plan had run for two years, industrial production had reached the pre-war level, and, more significant, individual productivity was on the up-grade. As the cost of living fell, conditions for all became more tolerable because in the Soviet Union any expansion of national wealth is spread over the entire population, Russian and non-Russian, worker and peasant. The 1949 harvest was described as being bigger than the best pre-war year though the pre-war area of cultivation had not been reached, a reflection of improved farming methods.

This book is an attempt to describe this process of recovery.

Chapter One

THE RED ARMY COMES HOME

ONLY after the act of capitulation had come into force, at midnight, German time, May 8-9, did the Soviet Government let its people know that the war with Germany was at an end. At ten minutes past two, Moscow time, radio announcer Levitan broke the news. The Russians were wary of Germany to the very end.

Beyond the end, in fact, because it was not until reports reached Moscow from the fronts that the enemy was actually fulfilling the terms of surrender that, two days after London and New York had begun to celebrate victory, the signal was given from the Kremlin for a thousand guns to fire in salute and for hundreds of aeroplanes to fly low over the exultant city releasing red, golden and violet flares as they weaved their way through the searchlight beams that cast an aureole about the city, revealing a single blood-red flag suspended hundreds of feet above the Kremlin.

The circumspect way in which the end of the war was announced, as well as revealing the suspicion with which every international event affecting the security of the Soviet Union is regarded, and reminding those of us who were sharing this solemn occasion with the Soviet people of the effectiveness of their government's control of the channels of information, was also, no doubt, to be attributed to the desire of the Russians to show their solidarity with the Czechs, still fighting in Prague on May 9 as General Rybalko's tanks streamed into the city. The liberation of

Prague was necessary to complete the list of Slav capitals where, with the help of the inhabitants, the Red Army had subdued the invader and given the war the special significance for Eastern Europe to which Generalissimo Stalin referred in his Victory address with the words: "The age-long struggle of the Slav nations for their existence and independence has finished in victory over the German invaders, over German tyranny." When in the dusk of May 9th, the guns of Moscow fired their last salute before crashing out in celebration of victory, the salvoes announced that the war which had begun with the advance of the Wehrmacht on to Czechoslovak soil in the shameful days of Munich had fittingly ended in the Old Town Square, before the smoking debris of Prague's City Hall. The Czechs were not to forget the way their brother-Russians withheld their rejoicing until the last patriot of Prague had laid down his life in the common cause.

During the first hours of peace Moscow belonged to its children. The day had been declared a public holiday and the workers slept late; but the children, uncertain whether they were expected to go to school, poured on to the streets, satchels over their shoulders. "Vasyuta! Lyenochka! The War's over," their shrill cries echoed in courtyard and street. They linked arms and swept through the sleeping city on their way to the Red Square and over the bridges towards the Gorky Park.

It was youth alone that gave itself up to unrestrained rejoicing, filling the broad streets near the University; demonstrating outside the United States Embassy, whose chargé d'affaires, George Kennan, later to be denounced in the Soviet press as a notorious enemy of the Soviet Union, delivered an impromptu speech in Russian on American-Soviet co-operation in peace-time; tossing the Dean of Canterbury, the venerable Dr. Hewlett Johnson, ten feet into the air and dragging Allied officers into groups

of dancing students.

But, except for the youthful, the Moscovites spent the day pensively. Every family mourned the loss of at least one of its members and tears that had been held back during the war flowed freely on the first day of peace. The Russian people had nursed their grief in silence. No casualty lists had been printed during the war and no mention had ever been made in Soviet communiqués of the Red Army's losses. "Long ago?" a friend would ask sympathetically looking at the photograph that hung on the wall. "Long ago. At Stalingrad," the laconic reply would come, and no more would be said as the widow or mother would take from a drawer the letter from the fallen man's comrades. Only when Stalin's voice faltered, barely perceptibly, as he spoke of the nation's "countless losses" and, with unwonted familiarity addressed his Soviet listeners as "my dear fellow countrymen and fellow countrywomen," did the Russian people give way to grief, and women who had borne the news of their menfolk's death with stoic calm, broke down and sobbed their hearts out as they clung to their children. To some of us who had been with the Russian people throughout the war, it seemed that in that solemn, poignant hour the climax of Russia's spiritual greatness was reached, that there was something profoundly religious about the mood in which people met the day when the struggle they had always seen as one between good and evil, whatever the phraseology used to describe it, was decisively and, they prayed, finally resolved.

In the afternoon the workers began to arrive in the inner city from the industrial suburbs. Dressed in their Sunday clothes, usually in family groups or together with their mates on the bench, they contributed to a popular demonstration that served as a reminder that Moscow is not only the capital of a working-class and peasant state but is itself by far the largest industrial centre in the Soviet Union.

With complete ease these workers moved about the centre of the city and because all who waited for them there were also of the working-class, wearing the same quality of clothes, speaking with the same accent, sharing the same interests, the demonstration became one of popular unity, symbolizing the homogeneous character of Soviet society.

At the same time the crowds that milled about the streets of Moscow on Victory Day left an impression of the unlimited variety of the Russian scene. Whether it lies in the nature of the people or is the result of the newness of their social institutions is a matter of opinion, but the non-stereotyped character of Russian life leaps to the mind every time one is provided with the opportunity of comparing the behaviour of its crowds with those of other European lands. It is as though everybody had deliberately made it his aim to resist attempts to impose uniformity on him and make him a cipher in the mass. It is not to Soviet Russia that one must go to hear community singing, though it is the land of choirs; it is not in the stadiums of Moscow that you will find gymnasts moving *en masse* in clockwork precision, though in its theatres ballet is danced to perfection; this is not the land of Butlin holiday-camps, though it is here that human society has gone farthest in developing ways of persuading the individual to fuse his will with that of his fellow member of the collective group; it is not in Soviet Russia but in the United States of America, the home of individualism, that political leaders are welcomed with tumultuous demonstrations, and the pattern of behaviour changed by the whim of a film-star or the design of an advertising agent. The extreme poverty of Soviet Russia in her early days of development and the simultaneous mobilisation of millions of her people for work on projects of a vast scale imposed a temporary standardisation of manner and appearance on Soviet life, just as the suddenness of the nation's advance from illiteracy to

literacy in a period of changing values caused a temporary standardisation of thought. And later we shall see how the coming of easier times and the stabilisation of values has been accompanied by a gradual release of the Russian people from restrictions on its liberties.

Popular festivals, whether organised or spontaneous, are seized on by these highly individualistic people as an opportunity for self-expression, not as a crowd but as a member of a group in an intricately ravelled network of groups. Looking down on the vast concourse that filled the Manège Square on the afternoon of Victory Day one noticed mainly the great diversity in its manner of expressing its happiness. There a kind of miniature Hyde Park Corner had been formed with anybody who wished to jumping on to the roof of an automobile and haranguing those in the neighbourhood, there a group had formed itself to dance Ukrainian steps, with another nearby singing *chastushki* of the Moscow suburbs. People from the same village somehow had come together, and there were many groups from the ruined cities of Western Russia. Outside the University professors stood among their students answering the dozens of questions that rose to peoples' lips on this day but which could all be summed up in the one question—and what now?

There had been little debate of post-war aims during the war, the Government going to some pains to discourage the growth of any conviction that a strikingly new course in domestic or foreign policy would be taken once the Germans were defeated. Like the Americans, the Russians felt themselves to have been the innocent victims of aggression and the fact that they did not blame their Government for having led them into war by incompetency or betrayal of national interests was to prove an important factor in determining their willingness to co-operate in its subsequent plans for reconstruction.

However, there remained in everybody's mind one un-

answered question. In what mood would the army return, those men who had passed through experiences which no Soviet man or woman had ever dreamed would have been the fate of their generation? Would they come home changed, and if so, for better or for worse? It was with these anxious questions in their hearts that many returned to their homes on the first night of peace.

* * * * *

When Germany's surrender halted the Red Army's advance, Russian soldiers were deployed throughout Poland, one half of Germany, and most of the Balkan and Danubian lands. Hundreds of thousands of others, ex-prisoners-of-war or forced labourers, were scattered far and wide over the European continent. Never before in the history of Russia had so many of its people been torn from their homes by the misfortunes of war and set travelling beyond her frontiers. The people of the Soviet Union and the people of capitalist Europe gazed at each other curiously, expectantly.

It was natural that those who felt they owed their freedom to the Red Army should have idealized its soldiers, picturing them as 'walking monuments'; no less natural that those who had guilty consciences should have seen in every Russian a potential demon of revenge. But the bewilderment caused by the appearance of several million Russians, neither monuments nor avenging spirits but just plain ordinary people who had been fighting a very long time in incredibly difficult conditions, has its roots in the profound ignorance of Russia in which most people of Eastern and Central Europe had been deliberately kept by their rulers in the inter-war period. There is a lesson to be drawn from the fact that it was in Bohemia, where this ignorance was least, that the Red Army received the warmest welcome, felt

most at home, and suffered least from the violent fluctuations in their popularity that took place in some other lands. Anti-Russian propaganda conformed to a stereo-typed pattern. Among the ignorant it was usually a reflection of fears fostered by fascist propaganda, fear of collectivisation among the peasants, of confiscation of property among town-dwellers. All the absurd and far-fetched stories about Bolshevik practices that used to circulate in Western Europe twenty years before reappeared, to be whispered in hotel lobbies and even in diplomatic chanceries, over glasses of synthetic lemonade in Berlin night-clubs, on Budapest's crowded Corso. Sometimes this feverish propaganda was motivated by nothing more than the natural reaction of ordinary people against wartime heroics. Behind those who cheer there will always be some who prefer to snicker and smirk.

On the working-class, deliberate anti-Soviet propaganda did not succeed in making any real headway. The workers of Central and Eastern Europe had long associated attacks on the Soviet Union with the methods of the social regimes that were overthrown in their lands with the defeat of Germany, and sensed in their revival an insidious attempt of the old order to re-establish its influence. Whether they originated from pettiness, ignorance or fear, these insidious attacks often revealed a hatred of socialism no less intense than of the Soviet Union. Even if the Red Army which the workers of Prague or Ujpest or Wienerneustadt saw bore little relation to their ideals, the ordinary Russian that emerged, when the heroic integument with which he was sheathed had dissolved, was recognisable as one of their own kind. The Red Army was acutely sensitive to these various currents of opinion. Its men were lonely and homesick. Like the Americans, the Russians brought their own ways of living with them into Europe, their ceremoniousness and reserve on public occasions, their distrust of informality

in official relations, their punctiliousness concerning the fulfilment of orders and their reluctance to abandon a single Russian habit for the convenience of others.

Most Russians saw Europe in a series of vignettes briefly illuminated by the glare of war. When occupational duties obliged them to settle down they tended to seclude themselves from the local inhabitants and to establish their own pattern of living, that pattern which repeats itself in house and cottage from Vladivostock to Brest-Litovsk and to which Russians are no less tenacious than the English to their characteristic forms of home-life. It was not, as far as I observed, so much that they were reluctant to contaminate themselves with things German, although Russian soldiers in the Berlin suburb where Marshal Zhukov had his headquarters told me that was why they preferred to sleep in the garden than in the bedrooms of the cosy little villa of Sturmführer Wolfgang Becher. That mood passed, for the Russians are a forgiving people, and the Command wisely withdrew from occupation duties men who for personal reasons found the strain of having to deal with Germans too heavy a psychological burden. The Russian desire to keep to themselves seemed to originate, rather, in a sort of quiet pride, a determination to stick to their own scale of values, all the more precious to them as a result of their hard-won victory. No nation engaged in the war was so conscious of victory, perhaps because none had contributed so much to it, perhaps because to none other had it seemed so remote as at that moment when the Germans were scaling the Caucasus and pressing against the middle Volga. Official propaganda was constantly reminding them of their heroic virtues, and this, it seemed to me when I visited Russian units abroad soon after the end of the war, had a levelling effect in the Red Army, not everywhere good for military discipline but at the same time re-introducing a democratic relationship between officers and men, which

considerably eased the strain that the tightening up of discipline had imposed on men who prided themselves that they belonged to a classless society. With the return of peace the opportunity of returning to a different way of life was felt throughout the army and for some time, at least, Russians abroad seemed to be too busy reasserting their rights to live the way they wanted, to have much time for foreigners and even to take much interest in other modes of life than their own.

How vividly I remember an unexpected call on the house where a Soviet repatriation team was billeted in the British zone of Germany ! It was a warm summer evening, and the Major to whom, I believe, I had brought an invitation to come out shooting, received me in the garden. I did not stay for long, but on my return journey I found myself trying to answer the question why that garden had seemed so essentially Russian. There had been a group of chauffeurs leaning on a fence and playing with a tame hare. In a small summer-house nearby a game of cards was in progress, while at the end of the garden, half-a-dozen men stripped to the waist were leaping about in a volley-ball match, played in the light that flooded from every window of the deserted house. I had been in Moscow since any of the Russians there and within a few moments I was the centre of a group of officers, men and D.P.'s answering a shower of questions about conditions at home. Was it the ease which men of all sorts and ranks felt in each other's company or the casual mood of complete relaxation in which they enjoyed their simple pleasures or the unrestrained warm friendliness of their greeting to one who brought them news of home that gave this rather forlorn little group its Russian character ? Or was it something that might be called an equality of manners giving the group a peculiar homogeneity ? Later, when travelling in the Soviet zone of occupation, I had occasion to observe how stubbornly

the Russians clung to their own ways of living and how far less removed from civilian standards was life in the Red Army than in the British or American armies of occupation. It was difficult to avoid the conclusion when one watched English and American soldiers enjoying amenities far greater than those to which they were accustomed at home, that sooner or later this would cause unrest and frustration. For the demobilised Russian, on the other hand, the return to civilian life meant a slighter change both in the standard of life and in habits and this has made the re-adjustment problem easier to solve. The Russians' experience had shown them that ultimately less dissatisfaction is caused by avoiding the creation of a special kind of army life and by concentrating rather on making living conditions as little different from those of civilian life as possible.

With its limited resources, the Red Army command did what it could to make its men feel at home. It met the dislike of towns that is a characteristic of many Russians by taking up its summer quarters in log-built camps in the forests. It permitted members of the army of occupation to bring their wives from Russia fully a year before the first British wives reached Germany. An effort was made to satisfy that intense desire for study that is a feature of Soviet military no less than civil life. Above all, it demobilised.

During the first six months after V.E. day I had several opportunities of travelling across the homeward path of the Red Army and of those millions of civilians and ex-prisoners-of-war released by the Allies' victory. During the summer of 1945 they were everywhere, bumping along the high-cambered roads of the Ukraine in old American lorries decorated with drooping boughs of birch, streaming day and night across the pontoon bridge that spanned the Danube at Bratislava, a bottle-neck from which they fanned out across Slovakia and Southern Poland, packed in goods-waggons in the congested sidings of Bryansk, crowding the

waiting-rooms in hundreds of Russian stations. How different they looked from those tense, pensive soldiers I had watched in November 1941 at stations on the Trans-Siberian railway ! The Russian habit of thought does not include that facility for cushioning the impact of unwelcome experience with that wry defensive humour which has seen the British Tommy through so many tough situations. Nothing in their own natures, nor in the way they were told of what lay ahead of them on the battlefield before Moscow, made it any easier for them to bear the appalling suspense of that journey from behind the Urals to their appointed places before the oncoming German army. Sometimes the train in which we were being evacuated stopped beside a troop train and we would hear from behind the closed doors of the waggons, the thin plaintive song of a Siberian ballad-singer, or the seemingly endless choruses sung to the whine of a harmonica. They were the voices of men who faced horror with their eyes wide open. One day, I remember, we were delayed at Yaroslavl which had been bombed during the night. It was a raw morning with snow swirling in a piercing breeze. The station was thronged with refugees from Moscow and Leningrad. Part of it still smouldered from the effects of the attack. Maddeningly, the loud-speakers were repeating the opening bars of " How Broad is My Land," the usual prelude to some important announcement. Nobody wanted to talk in case the news came and nobody could tear himself away from the platform, so tense was the mood those days when little was known of the progress of the battles before Moscow. A troop train drew in slowly and at once the doors slid open and hundreds of uniformed figures poised to jump down. At that instant a voice spoke, low and muffled, yet curiously penetrating. Opposite me, kettle in hand, there stood a grey-bearded soldier, some Siberian veteran, probably, who had volunteered to defend *Matushka Moskva*. I saw his

stern impassive face crease in a smile, his right hand move in the sign of a cross and then he cried " Stalin " and turned his eyes up towards the loudspeaker. And on that morning of November the Seventh, 1941, I learned not only how spellbinding was the prestige of Stalin on the Russian people, but also with what unreserved intensity they felt experience. How deep in those days was one's admiration and pity for men who were destined to suffer so keenly because their natures lay so wide open to suffering !

The joys of victory were experienced no less intensely by these candid impulsive Russians, yet the most forcible impression that the spectacle of the Red Army returning from the wars made on this observer was that it was thoroughly weary of military activity. I have never met a demobilised Russian, officer or man, who showed any sign of nostalgia for army life, so strong is anti-militarism in the Soviet character. The returning soldiers were greeted with that same solemn ceremoniousness with which Russia met Victory Day and they returned the nation's salute no less gravely. " We are victorious ! " read the words scrawled on the sides of dilapidated lorries, on cattletrucks, on the shabby doors of temporary barracks, and the ex-soldier lived the part of the victorious warrior no less wholeheartedly than he had lived that of the defender of his motherland. Within the bounds of possibility his demands had been forestalled by the authorities. " Creative work awaits you " ran the slogans at the detraining points. Rightly, his weariness had been assessed as a phase that would soon pass, leaving him impatient, restless, unsettled. The Red Army man's " Bill of Rights " included an obligation on local authorities to provide him with shelter, with work equivalent to his pre-war job or to any new qualifications he had acquired during military service. He was free to settle wherever he wished and could not be directed to a job. Premiums were offered as an attraction to settlement

in the new development areas of Eastern Siberia, of Sakhalin and the Kuriles. Places were found in the universities for those who wished to pursue studies interrupted by the war and it was soon found that the acquiring of a profession was the first aim of many. In 1946 some half of the students at the country's largest technical institutes were ex-servicemen.

The tasks of reconstruction in the devastated areas offered many outlets for soldierly qualities, and ample opportunities for canalising surplus energy. The campaign against ruin and loss was already taking a double form, a centrally planned drive for capital reconstruction involving vast projects for re-laying railways, bridge-building and the restoration of mines and factories ; and a series of local actions against housing shortage, the restoration of farms and the re-knitting of communications between town and country, tenuous at the best of times. It was illuminating to find on visits to rural districts how big a part ex-servicemen were playing in these local activities, as early as the summer of 1945. Posts that in normal circumstances would have little responsibility attached to them acquired a different importance in the early days of reconstruction when central authorities could offer little more than advice. Material and labour had to be sought locally, and matters that would normally have been passed up for decisions and the inevitable stamped *bumazhka* were carried out under the pressure of exigency. Sometimes when one visited outlying communities one had the impression that controls were so remote as to be virtually non-existent. Local reconstruction seems to have been carried out in the early days of peace in an unusually independent manner under the guidance of local soviets, frequently led by men of enterprise and initiative, among them many ex-servicemen and former partisans. Against abuses of this tendency, as will be seen, the state was later to take some precautionary

action, but while the central authority lacked the means of implementing its plans, local initiative was allowed free rein. Later, a martingale was added. Once in the Ukraine I asked the secretary of a regional executive council how he had spread the news of the end of the war. " I telephoned the local garrison and called out a squadron of Cossacks," he replied. " You see, I was a cavalry colonel."

The very size of the Soviet Union, while making a good deal of centralisation essential to the consolidation of the state, prevents the exercise of power from the centre falling too heavily on the community. It has been said that what the Soviet Union stands in greatest need of is a sound tradition of administration. That is no doubt true, but it is difficult to avoid the conclusion when travelling in the Soviet Union, that life has frequently been more tolerable because the lack of administrative means to enforce laws has thrown great responsibility on local authority and has led to the adoption of measures suitable to local conditions and resources. Many foreign visitors to the Soviet Union have remarked on the high standard of intelligence they have encountered among mayors and other local officials, who far from appearing to be the mere mouthpieces of the central authority generally have a robust independance of spirit which contrasts favourably with the type of civil servant often to be met with in Moscow. It is noteworthy that during recent years the higher ranks in state and party machinery are being recruited largely from people who have made their names in service outside the capital.

Men who had distinguished themselves as leaders in the army were appointed to many of these responsible posts at key points in the vast reconstruction front. When the post of deputy director for political affairs in Machine Tractor Stations was instituted in 1947 as a measure intended to smooth out relations between tractorists and collective farmers, ex-army officers formed the majority of those who

received the appointments. The rapid extension of Communist Party organisations through the countryside since the war, a result of some two million peasants joining the Communist Party during their war services, gave to many the opportunities to participate in local affairs with enhanced prestige.

An examination of the changes that had taken place in the minds of these returning soldiers during their war experiences would inevitably lead to a fruitless exploration of the mysteries of the " Russian soul." A short cut, however, is provided by the various measures applied by the government to make allowances for them, or, if considered necessary, apply correctives. The Communist Party keeps its ear to the ground and because the Soviet Union is not riven by class differences, its leaders have exceptional facilities for knowing and understanding the desires of the masses. Even the most disgruntled member of Soviet society will generally admit that the regime has one advantage over that of the Tsars, that its knowledge of the people it rules is infinitely greater. The State, which boldly claims the responsibility of making its members " good," at least takes the precaution of carefully studying society in order to forge the most effective ideological weapons for its struggle against tendencies it considers undesirable.

Not very much light was thrown by the Soviet press during the early days of peace on the effect of fighting abroad on the Red Army. As the army advanced beyond the Soviet frontiers there were a few articles of the " cautionary tales " category in its own newspaper *Red Star* of which the most discussed was a series written by Leonid Soboliev designed to warn the army against the glitter and superficial prosperity of Bucharest. Soboliev is a writer of discriminating taste who has travelled widely in Europe and he could thus claim to be speaking with some authority when he reminded the army that in spite of its claims to be

the " Paris of the Balkans," the Rumanian capital at the end of an unsuccessful war did not represent Europe at its best. On the young Russian officer Bucharest must have had an effect similar to that of Brussels on his English counterpart on short leave from the grey misery of the Ruhr, with the important difference that the Russian in all probability had not seen a city in normal conditions for three or four years. Soboliev was concerned to point out that under the glittering surface there often lay false metal and that if the Soviet soldier were to apply the standards of culture that he accepted at home he would often find Rumania fell far short in many respects. Could this country, he asked, be called civilised when a town the size of Constanza was without a dramatic theatre, while Bucharest retained the glaring contrasts between luxury and misery, while the country folk remained abysmally ignorant? Many a British officer had asked himself similar questions about Cairo and had preferred to spend his leave on the Cyrenaican beaches than in the Egyptian capital.

A few months after the publication of these articles a play was produced in the Ukrainian theatres dealing with the same theme in a more popular way. Alexander Korneichuk's "*Come to Zvonkovoye*" dealt with the re-adjustment problems of a young farm-girl who had served in the Red Army and after thoroughly enjoying herself in Bucharest returned to her village in the Ukraine, bringing with her a taste for sentimental tangoes, sun-bathing and dress-styles of a kind never before seen in Zvonkovoye. This behaviour, the author hinted, was the outward sign of a mood of dissatisfaction, of rebellion against the traditional values of Ukrainian village-life, as well as against those Soviet values in which selfishness and egoism have no place. In spite of its slender theme and the author's reluctance fully to face the difficulties of the re-adjustment process, this didactic little play was revealing in that it showed,

firstly, how the erring daughter of the village could be " corrected " without a special effort having to be made by the authorities, and secondly, how what was reasonable in her complaints about conditions in the village was accepted. On the one hand, we watch her gradually realizing the cost of setting herself apart from her friends, who are not slow to ridicule her pretentious manners; on the other, we are shown the effort made by the village community to re-absorb her by taking it for granted that her nature had been changed by her experiences abroad, so that it would be unreasonable for her to have to return to her job as dairy-maid. A happy solution is found when she is put in charge of the village canteen with the right to call it a Restaurant! The banality of the theme does not prevent this " play with a purpose " from being sincere. A good deal of sugar was needed on this kind of pill if the Ukrainian village of 1945 was to be persuaded to swallow it.

There is another character in this play who also found it hard to settle down, a moody, restless ex-sergeant who had returned from the wars to find that his wife had taken over his job. Unlike the hero of Alexander Tvardovsky's poem who, when warned in a vision of death on the battlefield that on his return to his village after the war he would find it ruined, poverty-stricken and starving, cried out in anguish that while he had an arm left to wield an axe he would re-build his home, this ex-soldier had expected to find every-thing at home as it had been before. In his case, doubts and discontent are dispelled by his being promoted to a job likely to absorb all his energy and satisfy his newly-acquired sense of self-importance.

Still pursuing the perplexing figure of the ex-soldier through the pages of newspapers and magazines, we find him the subject of an illuminating polemic between the poet Pavel Antokolsky and an army major. Antokolsky who had been on a visit to the Soviet occupied zone of Germany was

worried to find Russian soldiers blindly admiring all kinds of novelties in German life, which, he wrote, they were indiscriminately describing as "culture." Everywhere in Russia, he asserted, where ex-soldiers met, there was talk of German bath-room fittings, auto-bahns and electric gadgets. He suggested that the time had come for a distinction to be made between what he called big and little culture and he cited with approval the behaviour of a Soviet officer of whom he told the following story. This officer was strolling through the streets of a German town when he overheard the remark of a German woman who had commented on his slovenly appearance. Addressing her in fluent German, the officer asked her what she knew of *Faust* and the *Niebelungenlied*. Her replies were such as to convince the Russian of his superior knowledge of the German classics and putting his hands back into his pockets, he strolled on.

The retort to Antokolsky's theorizing on culture was a sharp one. A knowledge of the works of Goethe was no justification for slovenliness and the officer's behaviour most reprehensible. A truly cultured man should be as careful about his manners as about the cultivation of his mind. In fact, the reply ran, it was impossible to appreciate the classics if one spat out sunflower seeds in the street or wiped one's nose on one's sleeve. Such habits could not be reconciled with an understanding of Molière or of Italian painting. Finally, the writer indignantly denied that the Russian army had been seduced by the German level of technical efficiency.

We find the demobilized soldier again in a popular play by Malyugin, "*Old Friends*," which received much praise from the critics at a time when the Moscow stage offered few plays dealing with contemporary themes. Here the young officer returning from Germany behaves with a flambuoyancy and certain crudeness of manners which

shocks his friends and loses him the favours of his sweetheart, who prefers a quiet conscientious school-master. Poking fun, not unkindly, at the well-filled suit-case the officer has brought back from Germany, at his tendency to talk about glory and claim for the army the monopoly of the credit for victory, at his boastfulness about foreign girls he pretends to have known, the play gently debunks the self-styled war-hero.

A very different figure is the hero of Nikolai Virta's "*Our Daily Bread*," a mature, experienced Communist who returns to country-life grimly determined to fight conservatism and corruption. "I wouldn't exchange all their asphalt for a foot of our soil," he retorts to a colleague's remarks about Central Europe, "Some of our people seem to be eating their hearts out for their 'service.' I cannot understand how the devil they can forget that more geniuses were born in one century of our history than in all the world's history, that we had Lomonosov, Kutuzov, Chaikovsky, Tolstoi, Mechnikov ! How distasteful it is, Rogov, to hear people praising bourgeois comfort. You want to tell them—'Clear out, go back to those places that please you so much. Neither you nor the things you like are worth a kopeck.' For this indignant Communist the only way ahead is the path chosen by the Soviet Union before the war, though now the stride would be longer, the pace more hot. Stripped of his varnish of propaganda, Virta's Kovalyov is a credible version of the impatient, vital and somewhat intolerant Communist returned from the wars. Many a humdrum bureaucrat has been displaced, many an inflated reputation exploded, by the impact of the Kovalyovs on post-war Russian life.

But literature, at all times an untrustworthy source for the reporter, is doubly so in the Soviet Union, where it serves the avowed purpose of depicting the individual both as he is and as he should be. "To show Soviet man as the

bearer of the new human morality, to show him in development, distinguishing his progressive qualities and, in showing them, to help people to free themselves from what hangs over them like a burden of the past, to help them move forward—that is the basic task of our literature," Alexander Fadeyev told a young group of Russian writers when he addressed them in his capacity as Secretary-General of the Union of Soviet Writers. It is obvious that with such objectives before them, Soviet writers cannot be expected to contribute much to the genre of reportage, and it is scarcely surprising that the ex-soldier as he is, has become merged with the character that writers are romantically convinced he should be.

However, there is one genre of Russian reporting that shows us the ex-soldier in a less heroic, more probable and human light. The *feuilleton* and periodical survey of letters to the editor are features of the Soviet press which lay bare Russian life as it is. Furthermore, the abuses they frequently reveal need to be fairly widespread before a Soviet editor will find room for mention of them in his columns. Sometimes a short *feuilleton* pillorying a single offender will be the result of hundreds of letters, followed up by investigation by a reporter.

The following summary of a *feuilleton* from *Pravda* written by D. Zaslavski and K. Pogodin provides an example of this method of exposing shortcomings in administration. In this case, the target for the attack is a Communist Party organization, the victim of the abuse an ex-soldier.

Having spent 7 years in the Soviet Army, Alexander Kondratevich Shukalo returned to his previous work in the primary school in Chervenoarmeiski region, Zaporozhye oblast. He teaches conscientiously, likes his work and causes no trouble to the school board. Shukalo has a family of six and it is rather difficult for him to live. Moreover there were hitches in his ration supply caused by local

organizations. Shukalo was a Communist so he decided to see the regional committee, thinking that perhaps thus he could get some help. But he got no help. The regional committee were so busy that they had no time to deal with the affairs of individual Communists. Comrade Shukalo wanted to have a heart-to-heart talk about sore points, but the regional committee had not any department for heart-to-heart talks with individuals. So Shukalo left the regional committee without receiving any help of any kind and the secretary of the committee knew nothing of his visit. Communist Shukalo went in vain to his regional committee, so he picked up his pen to write to *Pravda* telling how he went to the regional committee and got no help from them.

Shukalo's letter was read by the editor of *Pravda* and was sent to the Zaporozhye *oblast* committee of the Party. Here the letter was not read but was forwarded to the Chervonoarmeiski regional committee. It is not quite true that no-one read the letter. Some-one glanced at it, saw the words "Chervonoarmeiski region" and there and then decided that it was probably a regional affair.

Shukalo's letter arrived safely in the Chervonoarmeiski region but there it stopped. There was nowhere else to send it. It had to be attended to. They did not want to attend to Shukalo himself but they had to attend to his letter.

Shukalo could not now complain about the lack of attention paid to him. On the contrary he was paid too much. Now he was able to have his heart-to-heart talk, and with the first secretary of the regional committee himself. And with the second secretary, too. The secretaries paid great attention to Shukalo's political education. He was re-educated so persistently that he did not have a moment left to ask questions on his material needs.

The secretaries objected because he had written to *Pravda* about personal matters. This, they said, disclosed

his political ignorance and lack of self-restraint. The first and second secretaries must have been eloquent and able to convince people for Shukalo admitted his mistake and promised not to write to *Pravda* again. When he went home he sent a statement to the regional committee admitting that he had behaved in an anti-Party manner and that he was ashamed of himself for having done so.

The regional committee received his statement and was satisfied with it and it began to travel in the opposite direction. In the *oblast* committee " some-one " sent the letter to *Pravda*. Apparently they thought the matter was closed, the mistake acknowledged and the correspondence filed away.

The writers commented: " The regional committee and the *oblast* committee must pay attention to mistakes and to the position of teachers, Communists, etc. We see in this not the single mistake of Teacher Shukalo but a whole series of mistakes firstly that of Shukalo when he admitted his own " error," and that of the workers in the two committees for judging as an " offence " the right of every Communist to write to his paper."

Another glimpse of the campaign conducted by the press in support of the ex-soldiers' complaints of unsympathetic treatment by local bureaucracy is provided by the *Moscow Bolshevik* of May 28, 1947.

The victim of this run-around by a local functionary was ex-serviceman Comrade Ishukin, who returning home after five years in the army, applied to one of the departments of a local soviet. As a reward for military service, demobilised Soviet soldiers have been guaranteed living quarters and Comrade Ishukin accordingly made his application to the regional housing department.

He went into the office and asked to see the official in charge. A bureaucrat behind a reception window did not reply.

" Excuse me," the soldier said, " but I am speaking to you."

The bureaucrat answered, " I am not here yet."

Comrade Ishukin was surprised. " What do you mean ? Am I not to believe my own eyes ? "

This annoyed the bureaucrat. " Don't be insolent," he retorted. " If I say I am not here, it means I am not here " and he slammed the window to.

Comrade Ishukin was not to be shaken off so easily.

" But this is no hallucination " he said, " I can even touch you with my hand."

This outraged the bureaucrat.

" What," he cried, " Touch me with your hand ? I am an official. Are you trying to start a brawl in a Soviet office ? "

And with that he rushed to a telephone.

" Is that the militia ? " he shouted urgently, " This is Inspector Parshin speaking. Send the militia immediately. There is a case of hooliganism in this office. An attempt has been made on an official. You say you can also send a dog ? All right, send a dog, too, but come quickly."

Two militiamen dashed into the office. " There he is," the bureaucrat shouted. " Grab him. He raised his hand against me. I'll teach him a lesson for touching me while I am on duty ! "

But when they had heard both sides of the story, the militiamen sided with Comrade Ishukin. Addressing Inspector Parshin, one of them said: " Bureaucrats like you provoke the calmest citizen to red-hot fury." The disgruntled Inspector then charged Ishukin with being the leader of a criminal band. " I know your house," he screamed, " It's a haunt of thieves and bandits."

In self-defence Comrade Ishukin wrote to *Moscow Bolshevik* complaining of the way he had been treated by a " small bureaucrat." The newspaper raised only one ob-

jection to this letter. "Parshin is not a small bureaucrat, but a big one."

Inspector Parshin, one may be certain, was not the only heartless bureaucrat who would have cause to reflect on this *feuilleton* and Comrade Ishukin not the only ex-soldier facing post-war housing problems to welcome this sympathy for his tribulations.

The returning soldiers brought their own brand of humour with them. Their jokes, which had a dash of sarcasm in them not generally found in Russian popular humour, quickly caught on at home, causing something like a revival of the atmosphere of the early days of planning when bureaucrats and chiefs exceeding their authority were held up to ridicule. Fifi, the ignorant and extravagant wife of the colonel or general who had risen rapidly in the war, was the subject of many anecdotes. It was Fifi who replied heatedly to somebody who shush-ed her as she came in late to the opera: "You're an overture yourself"; Fifi who, decked up in foreign clothes, protested to the doctor who wished to use a local anaesthetic for a minor operation: "Local? My husband wouldn't hear of it. He always insists on foreign"; and Fifi who wrote to the general in Berlin: "My friends tell me the piano is good but that it lacks resonance. Did you forget to send it?"

During the first half of 1947 the campaign to press local authorities and enterprises to give the ex-soldiers the rights granted them by the law introduced when the first batch of demobilised men returned in June, 1945, was in full swing. *Pravda*, a vigilant watch-dog in this field, drew attention to a number of typical examples of failure to comply with the law. Rarely were complaints received that ex-servicemen were meeting with any difficulty in obtaining work. Most of them dealt with the housing problem. An ex-major, for example, with an outstanding war record, an officer who had seen Berlin and Prague and received five

decorations, sought an injunction against the State Bank who had invited him to return to his job there in 1945, guaranteeing him a room. For 420 days, he stated, he had been faced every day with the question of where to spend the night. Members of the housing branch of the bank, he alleged, met his request for a room with the remark, "What do you need a room for? Marry a wife with an apartment and everything will be all right . . . ."

The law of June, 1945, promising the returning soldier a place to live in was one of the boldest measures taken by the government to meet the post-war situation. It was introduced at a time when many of the 15 million people made homeless by enemy action were living in barracks, mud-huts, dug-outs, or temporarily repaired quarters. There was a severe shortage of building materials, brick-making having been virtually suspended during the war, and the lumber industry more ruthlessly stripped of its machinery and labour than any other branch of Soviet industry. Two years after the war only one half of the brick-works of Byelorussia had been re-opened, while of those on which Moscow relied only one-fifth were equipped to dry bricks during the long Russian winter.

Furthermore, the ex-soldiers were not the only people claiming homes. The evacuation of millions of workers with their families to the Urals had laid a strain on housing facilities that, borne in good spirit during the exciting days of war, was beginning to prove irksome when in place of the principle of equality of sacrifice, a return was being made to that of 'to each according to his work.' The great factories of Magnitogorsk, Chelyabinsk, Zlatoust, Sverdlovsk and other Ural cities were soon placed under an obligation to provide individual homes for their workers and to take steps towards restoring a standard of living which before the war was reputed to be substantially higher than that in Moscow or Leningrad.

Yet another complication was caused by the return of a part of the mass of workers which had shifted eastward in 1941. Regional housing committees and officials of the state attorneyship have ever since the end of the war been overwhelmed with extremely complicated problems arising from the conflicting claims of ex-soldiers, war-widows, returning evacuees and, last but not least, since in this country as anywhere else, possession is nine-tenths of the law, the occupant. As early as August, 1941, the government had announced that persons temporarily occupying homes of men called to the colours were liable to summary eviction on the return of the soldier, or, should he become a casualty, on the demand of his family. However, it appeared from a decision of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. taken early in 1947 that this regulation was frequently circumvented by appeals made to local courts, often leading to a stay of execution. The Supreme Court ruled that the courts had no right to hear such appeals, even less to take action prejudicial to the interests of ex-servicemen, and laid it down that the right of the latter to get his home back was inalienable, even though he might have been behind-hand in paying his rent at the time he was mobilised. Similar protection was provided to returning evacuees. Only in cases where the new tenants had lost their homes through enemy action or requisition by the army was a limited stay of execution of eviction permissible. However, border-line cases were frequent and provided the courts with interminable work for long after the end of the war. When one considers also the complications arising out of questions of ownership of furniture and other moveable property, and adds to this the fact that vast numbers of documents were destroyed or lost during the war, some idea may be obtained of the immense complication of such problems and of the tedious processes required for their solution, involving the ex-soldier and evacuee in months of patient enquiry, against

a background of overcrowding with which Western Europe has nothing to compare.

I have nothing but admiration for the way the courts I visited during that period handled their task. They seemed to be doing their work with great understanding and in a spirit of humane paternalism. I remember visiting one where a man was being charged by a group of returned evacuees with having unlawfully knocked down a wall and adding the space of a commonly shared bathroom to his own room. The flat in question was one of those former middle class Moscow homes converted after the revolution into apartments for several families. In such conditions existence is only tolerable if a spirit of harmony of ' live and let live ' prevails. This, it was obvious from the indignant appearance of the serried mass of neighbours who faced the defendant, was far from being the case at No. 18 Serafimovich Lane. All sorts of quite irrelevant accusations were hurled at him under the tolerant chairmanship of a young woman judge. The defendant had used his flat for immoral purposes, someone said. What exactly did citizen plaintiff mean by that? the chairman of the bench asked. Well, he had a surprising number of lady-visitors. And how would the citizen plaintiff like it if someone were to suggest that his visitors, who as far as the chairman knew, might be equally numerous, were coming to see him for immoral purposes, and, in any case, what had the alleged immorality to do with the bathroom wall? Well, somebody else retorted, there had been some valuable property stored in the bathroom at the outbreak of the war which was no longer there. And what exactly was this valuable property? the bench enquired. After prolonged enquiry it was established that it consisted of three or four bowls which the defendant admitted having used to catch the water from a leaking ceiling, and several logs, which he did not deny having used for firewood during the winter of 1941 when the temperature

in his room fell to minus 7. Again and again, the chairman's shrewd and patient questions drew the case back from realms where the characters of Mikhail Zoshchenko would have been quite at home until finally, after several hours, it was discovered that the plumbing in the " bathroom " had not worked since 1934. The judgment was eminently just. The defendant was ordered to rebuild the wall, the house-manager was recommended to get the bathroom working, the tenants were advised to use it, the court bore the cost of the action.

It was not always so easy to reach such a happy ending to a housing problem. When shortages are as acute as they were in the Soviet Union at the end of the war it is not possible to be fair to all without creating grave social discontent. The Soviet authorities sought to avoid this by giving priorities to the claims of the category of citizens they considered the most deserving, the ex-servicemen and their families. We have seen that there were lapses but while they have to be reckoned with, they do not negate the validity of the official claim to have kept faith with the demobilised soldier. As far as the rural areas were concerned, the first three and a half years of peace provide an impressive record of house-building. In the liberated areas of Russia, Byelorussia and the Ukraine alone, new homes for 9½ million had been provided by the end of September, 1948, a total of over 2 million houses. Ex-soldiers shared in two ways in this gigantic reconstruction task. They helped both to build and to design their homes. Very soon after VE-day a group of Kiev architects, actively supported by the Ukrainian Government, launched a scheme for preparing plans for standardised cottages, and as a first step took pains to consult public opinion about variations and improvements on the traditional designs. Architectural students visited the ruined villages, an exhibition of tentative designs was held and soldiers arriving at Kiev and other de-

training points were taken to it and their opinions sought. The Ukrainian press co-operated. One day in August, 1945, the principal newspaper of the republic devoted three of its four pages to pictures and plans of the Institute of Rural Reconstruction's first projects. Letters poured in. I was in the Ukraine that summer and by chance while exploring the surroundings of Saint Sophia Cathedral came across the half-ruined building where there worked the group of enthusiasts who had tackled the job of rebuilding the Ukrainian villages. They told me they had found ex-servicemen highly alert on the question of improvements and practically unanimous in their desire to discard the traditional layout of the Ukrainian cottage which allows for little privacy. Great interest had also been expressed in the use of factory-prepared materials, prefabricated window-frames and other aids to swift and neat construction.

Both Russia and Byelorussia were quick to follow the Ukraine's lead and by the time the 1946 building season had begun tens of thousands of copies had been distributed to the building brigades which every collective farm with a reconstruction problem was recommended to form. The Soviet Academy of Architecture had begun to prepare plans as early as 1943, when a set of general rules for post-war cottage building was drawn up, taking into account the conditions which were expected to prevail after the war. It was agreed then that the construction of single storey homes, as ample in size as possible, would best meet the demands of the times. Certain limiting factors were considered, including the need to make the maximum use of local material and of making allowance for temporary shortages of skilled manpower for the preparation of material and for the construction itself. In preparing their projects architects were asked to bear in mind that most of the houses built in the country areas after the war would have to be put up by untrained labour and without mechanical aid. At the

beginning of 1946 the Institute of Construction for the Masses, a branch of the Academy of Architecture, published in handy form a collection of twenty projects. A common feature of all cottages is the provision of buildings for livestock and poultry. Cottages situated in open country have gardens of between 800 and 1,500 square metres, while those which are built in hamlets have between 400 and 800 square metres of ground. The principle of one family per home is adhered to and there is no sharing of gardens. Considerable pains have been taken by the architects to provide for a higher standard of comfort and domestic economy than pre-war levels. In preparing these projects for distribution they provided exhaustive directions for construction. Provision was also made for fittings which would become available some time later. For example, it was assumed that in the immediate post-war period the average Soviet village could not have the means of providing its cottagers with a central water supply, and that for the time being, drinking water would continue to be drawn from wells or village pumps. But all plans allowed for an eventual water system.

Excluding the area of verandas and cold-rooms the average floor-space of these post-war Soviet cottages is :—

One living room type, single storey cottage	36	sq. metres
Two living room, single storey cottage	44	„ „
Three living room, single storey cottage	50	„ „
Two living room, semi-detached cottage	53	„ „

The size of rooms has been planned in consultation with the Institute responsible for the design of household furniture. Their height is about ten feet. Each cottage has sheds for storing wood, for a cow and for poultry. It is envisaged that the gardens will be used for fruit and vegetables. In design the typical post-war cottage is somewhat neater than in the past due to the use of standardised

parts and metal or prepared slate roofing, but traditional features are preserved in the large balconies and the shuttered windows.

Such good progress was made in rural reconstruction that on the eve of the winter of 1948 the press was able to announce the end of the mud-hut home, in the entire area which had been overrun by the Germans. The standards achieved are by no means ultimate standards but they are such as to justify the claim that within three years of the end of the war the shelter problem had been solved in the Soviet countryside.

The returning soldier set foot in every field of Soviet life. You saw him, conspicuous for his earnestness, among the students pouring out of University lecture halls, sitting among young workers at adult education courses in the factory-clubs. You met him as an agronomist testing seeds in a kolkhoz laboratory, his interest in farming heightened as a result of seeing the methods used abroad. As a factory-worker he shrugged his shoulders when appealed to in grandiloquent phrases, but did his duty when the task was explained to him clearly. Jobs requiring his personal initiative or which placed him at one remove from direct control appealed to him. Many were drawn to driving road-transport, many into the revived co-operative movement. He had become more politically conscious in the sense that he sought an answer to more questions than hitherto concerning his position in the community. He was, perhaps, less willing to accept unquestioningly the Soviet way of life ; he invited an explanation of it, not because he felt indisposed towards it but because his interest in the regime he had fought to defend had been quickened. A certain impatience which, if frustrated, threatened to express itself in resentment had its origins in the lessons army life had provided about the hitherto untapped resourcefulness of the Russian nature.

But if one is to generalise about this generation of Soviet men and women who have survived the war, I think it is its thirst for knowledge that distinguishes it most strongly. Study has claimed many returning Red Army men. If they have gone into the factories they are prominent among those who are attending courses to improve their qualifications. They have poured into the country's institutes. Some have even gone back to finish their schooling in the 10th and 11th forms. Many of my young friends who spent the first few months after demobilisation visiting relatives, " having a look round " as they said, and in most cases, marrying, eventually decided to study, though generally in combination with a job. Their pride at having been soldiers in a war to defend their country and its socialist way of life drives them to seek qualifications with which they can take an honourable share in its reconstruction. They are urged forward by the desire to hold positions in civil life as useful, and at the same time, as respected as their rank in the army. They wear their medal ribbons not in order to advertise their prowess in war or to advance their claims to rewards, but as a pledge that they will display the same qualities that earned them on the battle-field, in the struggle for a better life in peaceful conditions. They will always remain soldiers and, contemptuous of cold and hunger and other hardships in this period of rehabilitation, they continue to serve their country. They do not look for miracles. They know that improvement can come, not as the result of gifts or loans from elsewhere but by the diligent, selfless, well-directed, and skilful work of the mass of the people. They are constantly drawing on their memories of the war to inspire them in peace. Those students you meet, living on modest scholarships, sharing small rooms in ruined cities with three or four others, gradually passing from grade to grade in the acquisition of a qualification, have known the bitterness of the first defeats, the paralyzing fear of death,

the uplifting news of victories swelling into the triumph of those days when on the roads of conquered Germany they met the tens of thousands of liberated Frenchmen, Englishmen, Czechs, Dutchmen . . . . They know their country, because they have marched thousands of miles through the fields they have swept clear of the enemy and seen it not as prosperous and fertile but as a wilderness crying out for their help ; their cities, not as places to return to after victory for relaxation and fun but as bludgeoned, abolished buildings to be rebuilt. They love their people, because they have seen them dead, buried and unburied, because they have smelt the sickly-sweet odour of their burning flesh, and seen them die in agony beside them in the hospitals. They respect their rulers because they have summoned them sternly to exert every ounce of their strength in the war against want, because they tell them the way will be hard and the battle long, because they provide them with a dynamic policy for re-shaping this war-torn land.

Chapter Two

REBUILDING THE FACTORIES

On February 9th, 1946, Joseph Stalin took the first steps towards galvanising the nation into a new mood with an announcement of the long-term objectives for the economic development of the Soviet Union. In an election-eve address delivered in person in a Moscow constituency, the Soviet premier set targets for four branches of Soviet industry, cast-iron, steel, coal and oil, forecasting that it would take at least fifteen years to reach them, but that production on the scale indicated was necessary if the nation was to be safeguarded against all eventualities. . . . " It can be done, and we must do it," he declared. Tempestuous applause, it was reported, greeted these words.

The level of industry set by Stalin's speech appears to have taken most of the world by surprise, and a good many students of Soviet affairs hastened to interpret it as indicating that, still preoccupied with the problem of defence, the Soviet government was condemning its people to a standard of living lower than that which might have been attained under a regime less concerned with its security. Examination of the targets, however—50 million tons for cast-iron, 60 million for steel, 500 million for coal, and 60 million for oil—reveal that they are roughly those which in 1939, the Communist Party had worked out as necessary if the Soviet people were to reach a standard of living equal to that of the United States. When, in that year, Stalin was describing

the growth of industry in the U.S.S.R. with that of the principal capitalist countries during the previous 25 years, he had pointed out that the economic power of a country's industry was not expressed by the volume of industrial output in general, irrespective of the size of population, but by the volume of industrial output taken in direct reference to the amount consumed per head of population. In other words, the larger a country's population, the greater its need for consumer goods, and, hence, the larger the industrial output required. " Only if we outstrip the principal capitalist countries economically can we reckon upon our country being fully saturated with consumer goods, on having an abundance of products, and on being able to make the transition from the first phase of Communism to its second phase," Stalin said in his report to the 18th Congress of the Communist Party. He could, surely, not have made it plainer that the prime motive in outstripping the production of other industrial countries was not economic rivalry, but the raising of the living standards of all the people, and that the prime cause of the size of the objectives aimed at was the great size of the country's population. But then, in countries which have already spent many decades in increasing their industrial productivity, the close link between investment in heavy industry and the raising of living standards is not always fully realised. It is useful to remember that while, in 1938, the output of cast-iron per head of population in England was 145 kilogrammes, in the U.S.S.R. it was only 87 kilogrammes. Corresponding figures for steel production were 226 and 107 kilogrammes, for electricity 620 and 233 kilowatt-hours. As the cardinal principle of Soviet economic expansion was a Socialist one, the ultimate objective Communism, it is clear that the relatively low standard of living denoted by these comparative figures could not be tolerated for long.

Just a month after Stalin had summoned the people to

turn their faces from the ruins of the war and look trustfully into the future, the Five Year Plan of Socialist Reconstruction was laid before the newly-elected Supreme Soviet. On March 18th, 1946, it was issued from the Kremlin as a Law, signed by Nikolai Shvernik, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. It had been passed by acclamation in the Great Hall of the Kremlin.

To summarize a document at the same time so broadly conceived and so detailed—it occupied thirty seven columns of the press—is to belittle it. One must take into account, of the press—is to belittle it. One must take into account, too, not only its conclusions but its dialectical growth, and the modifications introduced as the plan is built up from the lowest level. Above all, it is necessary to consider it against the background of earlier plans.

The first Five-Year Plan of 1928 was conceived at a time when in the main branches of industry the Soviet Union had barely reached the limited output of 1913, at which time Csarist Russia was dominantly agricultural. Its central idea was, in Stalin's words, to " guarantee the systematic supremacy of the socialist sector of national economy over the capitalist order." Thus, from the beginning, the solution sought for the problem of poverty inherited from the past was a socialist one. The Soviet state, it was stated most emphatically, was not interested in raising its productivity by any means. The aim was to consolidate a young socialist society and to provide the essentials for social security and the material well-being of the working-class. In this lies the essential difference between Soviet planning and that of lands whose governments have adopted the planning principle as a means rather of averting economic crisis than of establishing a new social or economic order.

For Russia, perhaps, there were other paths that might have been taken in the late '20's. In the light of later events, however, it would be difficult to deny that, had another been chosen, the existence of the Soviet Union, not only as a

Socialist but, indeed, as an independent nation would have been even more gravely jeopardized than it was when the testing-period came.

The main task set by the first Five-Year Plan was the development of heavy industry. A series of objectives as to output were set and a strict order of priorities established. Mines had to come before steel, transport before tractors. At the core of the plan lay machine-building, to enable the country to re-equip itself on the basis of socialism. " Unless we have heavy industry, unless we restore it, we shall not be able to build up any industry ; and without that we shall be doomed as an independent country." These words of Lenin, repeated in 1933 by Stalin, were the justification of the severe sacrifices demanded of the Soviet people. Against the background of the upsurge of nazism the defence of Russia's independence was, in the view of Soviet leaders, a prerequisite to the success of its socialist principles. The same theme was to run through Soviet patriotic speech fifteen years later.

Fulfilment of the first Five-Year Plan by the end of 1932 found the Soviet Union producing all the machinery needed by her metallurgical and electrical industries. A modern tool-making industry had been established and the country was fully independent of foreign imports in agricultural machinery. The U.S.S.R., its leaders announced with justifiable pride, had been converted from a weak agrarian country, dependent on the " caprices " of the capitalist lands, into a powerful industrial country, fully self-reliant and independent of these " caprices." Four years had given the Soviet Union an iron and steel industry, a tractor industry, an automobile industry, a machine-tool industry, a chemical industry, a modern agricultural machinery industry, an aircraft industry. New coal and metallurgical bases, a new textile centre, had been founded. The volume of industrial output had been increased three-fold as com-

pared with 1913. At Kharkov and Stalingrad, at Moscow and Gorki, at Dnieprostroi, Magnitorgorsk and Kuznetsk, vast new plants had been constructed. A net-work of machine-shops and chemical plants spread over the Urals. And, most significant of all, socialist industry had become the sole form of industry in the U.S.S.R.

But, already, two closely inter-related features which were to be constantly present in the development of later plans were visible in the first Five-Year Plan. Because of a deteriorating international situation a number of factories had to be switched to defence work in the early '30's, causing the accomplishment to fall short of promise by 6%. Secondly, " the output of articles for general use was smaller than was required," as Stalin pointed out in a characteristic understatement.

The main difference between the second Five-Year Plan introduced in 1933, and the first, lay in the measures taken to meet the needs of the people. The Soviet Union had become an industrial country, with industrial output in 1933 forming over 70% of the total in the national economy. Before its workers now lay the task of mastering the new machines, of acquiring new techniques. The human factor became relatively more important. These were the years in which new incentives to labour were introduced, in which the educational facilities in the Soviet Union were most rapidly expanded, when the principle of differential payment was firmly defended and the levellers publicly castigated. Since the beginning of 1931 there was no unemployment. The fear of discharge could no longer be relied on as a deterent to slackness. By the end of the first Five-Year plan there were twice as many men employed in large scale industry than in 1928. In 1930, there were 14½ million registered workers in Soviet industry, in 1933 almost 22 million, while by 1938 the figure had risen to 28 million.

The Soviet authorities at no time included in the im-

mediate objectives of their plans the full satisfaction of the material needs of this vast army of workers. Again and again the argument was heard that the light and food industries could only be expanded if the machine-building industry maintained its predominant place in the national economy. In 1933 machine-building formed over one quarter of the gross output of industry, textiles only 9%. The production of instruments and means of production rose from 10.2 billion roubles value in 1929 to 24.3 billion roubles in 1933, an increase of 138%, while the corresponding increase in the production of consumer goods was from 10.8 billion to 17.6 billion, or 63%.

The main compensation for the dearth of manufactured consumer goods was more plentiful food, due partly to increased production on the collective-farms, partly to the vigorous measures taken by local authorities to improve distribution. In 1934 the State went into the shop-keeping business in a big way, setting itself up in competition to the co-operative societies who were accused of conservatism and complacency, if not of worse offences against society. As a result of Stalin's personal intervention local Soviets were encouraged to participate in manufacturing and trading, a step which was to have important results during the war. " Leftists " who murmured that a Socialist State had no business to engage in trade were slated as " freaks and chatterers." Thousands of factories opened their own supply departments and canteens. The first " closed shops" appeared, reserved for workers of the enterprises that ran them. They too were to prove useful during the war when even stricter measures in planned consumption had to be introduced.

It may be asked what it was that induced the Soviet workers in the '30's to give their labour so unstintingly to a state that offered so little material reward. The fear of dismissal was slight, and the slacker did not face hunger.

Some of the enthusiasm may be attributed to the great opportunities for promotion provided by a rapidly expanding economy, some to the rarely disappointed hope that each year would see a marked improvement in living conditions, and a rise in the real value of wages. Propaganda undoubtedly had a share in stimulating production though the Communist Party in the 1930's was not the force in the factories that it was to become a decade later.

The answers which the writer has been most frequently given when this question has been posed to Soviet workingmen are, firstly, that during the period of the first three five-year plans the imagination of the Russian worker was genuinely fired by the drama of the Soviet Union in construction, that, approaching the machine at first with a certain curiosity, he later became deeply absorbed in the problem of mastering it, and, when the period of socialist emulation started, responded eagerly to the challenge to his skill. Far-fetched, even romantic, as this explanation may seem to the Western reader, the Stakhanov movement which after its spontaneous beginning among a group of workers interested in improving technique, spread like wild-fire throughout Soviet industry, seems to provide satisfactory evidence that some such mood existed among the factory workers in the '30's.

The development of state measures for workers' welfare, and particularly the care expended on their children, is another reason frequently given to explain their wholehearted co-operation in production. How extensive this was the following figures will indicate. Between 1929 and 1933, the number of children in elementary schools increased from 11½ to 19 million, in intermediate schools from 2½ to 6½. The number of children receiving pre-school education increased during the same period from 838,000 to 6 million. By 1938-39, the number of children in elementary schools had grown to 21¼ million, in intermediate to over 12 million. Between 1933 and 1938 over 4,000 urban, 16,000 rural schools were built.

Now the parents of the children who went to these schools in the '30's belonged, in the main, to generations whose education, when it can be called such, fell into the period of the first world war and the turbulent five or six years that followed it. Their own experience in factories and offices, or on the collective farms, had brought home to them how inadequately equipped they were for the tasks that confronted a citizen of a modern state in process of rapid development. Not the least motive the Russians may have had for their selfless toil in the period of construction was their belief that their children would receive the rewards, children on whom the state, investing in the future, was already lavishing a care out of all proportion to its means. Soviet education may, to a certain extent, have loosened the ties that bind children to their parents. But neither it, nor any other system, has ever succeeded in changing the feelings of a parent for a child.

The third Five-Year Plan was launched in the shadow of a war that was to dash the hopes of many of those who had worked for the benefit of future generations. Russia and Japan were sparring across the Mongolian frontier; in Europe the British and French governments were seeking to appease Hitler at the expense of the Soviet Union. It was a period when an influential section of the world press was shouting vociferously about "the weakness of the Russian army," as if, Stalin suggested, to egg the Germans on to march farther east after the abandonment of Czechoslovakia. The third Five-Year Plan which took up the further development of national economy at a time when life for the ordinary citizen had become tangibly easier, was characterized by a return to the sterner principles of 1928. Instead of narrowing, as it had been doing during most of the '30's, the gap between the production of durable goods

and consumption goods grew wider. During the first three years of the 3rd Five-Year Plan the machine building and metalworking industry increased its output by 76%, once again over twice the increase recorded for consumers' goods production. In 1940 the output of means of production was 52% up on 1937, the output of articles of consumption 33%. No less striking was the increase in the pace of industrial expansion announced by the government during the fulfilment of the plan. Since 1933 Stalin had been insisting on a somewhat easier pace than that at which industrialisation had advanced during the first Five-Year Plan, when the annual average increase in output was 22%. For most of the next ten years the increase remained steady at about 13 to 14%. But in 1941 the government called for an effort comparable only with that demanded of its people in the days of the first Five-Year Plan, for an 18% increase in metallurgy and machine building. And once again the rewards for this effort, in the form of consumer goods, were to fall far short of requirements. On the one hand, there was a 23.5% increase in means of production, on the other, an increase of only 9% in articles of consumption.

No attempt was made to conceal the grim irrefutable logic of the government's case that just as ten years before it had been necessary first to build the machines and then to use them for improving human welfare, so, at a time when war was spreading across Europe, the defence of the country had to be placed before the comfort of its citizens. Once again the issue was put squarely before the people—to lose independence means to lose socialism.

But there was one feature of the third Five-Year Plan which, if stressed for defence purposes then, has had positive effects in the post-war period. The great spurt in capital investment that was planned for 1941 was the result of a decision taken to force the pace of development

in the non-European parts of the Soviet Union and in Transcaucasia. The 1941 annual capital investment plan called for the following increases over 1940 :—

In the Urals and Western Siberia ...	58%
In Georgia	101%
In Armenia	135%
In Azerbaijan	122%
In Tadjik S.S.R.	83%
In Kazakh S.S.R.	51%
In Kirghiz S.S.R.	132%
In Turkmen S.S.R.	72%

Even larger assignments for capital investments went to the national economy of the Uzbek S.S.R.

The fact that most of the three thousand new plants on which construction was planned for 1941 were located in regions never reached by the enemy suggest that the government had a shrewd idea of the way history was going to take shape. More than a third of capital construction work in the years 1938-41 fell to the eastern areas of the U.S.S.R. In the first half of 1945 industrial output in these areas was twice as great as in the corresponding period of 1941. In the four years of the war, industrial output increased 3.6 times in the Urals, 2.8 times in Siberia.

To summarize, thirteen years of planned construction had enabled the Soviet Union to reach its main objectives, by providing it with all the means of building and defending socialism within its own frontiers and of securing the fundamental requirements of the working-class, steady occupation, a guaranteed supply of food, protection of the health of its members, the education of its children, care for the aged. By the end of the second Five-Year Plan conditions had been created which would have enabled the government to go forward with measures to provide more adequately for its workers material comfort. Preoccupation

with the country's security, however, caused a postponement of these alleviations, though enough was achieved to cause people to look back later on the years 1937-38 as years of relative plenty.

Above all, the fulfilment of the Five-Year Plans had revealed to the Soviet people what they were capable of creating. New cities had arisen within the memories of young men, rivers that had flown unchanged through Russia's thousand year old history had been harnessed, natural wealth undreamed of by Russia's earlier rulers was being tapped. When war broke out on Soviet territory it brought to a halt a process of energetic expansion which no other country in the world could match.

Elsewhere, war brought a heightening of activity both of individuals and of nations, created an unaccustomed and not always unwelcomed sense of tension and drama, gave men and women, sometimes for the first time in their lives, a clear realisation of their duties to society and with it a recognition of their own importance. It gave jobs to men who had long been unemployed, incomes to women who had hitherto never seen the inside of a factory. In some lands it raised the living-standards of the working-class and enriched the farmers. Trade union and labour leaders found themselves being treated with a new consideration by politicians. The Left advanced and in many places the workers felt that, however much the war was costing their countries, their own position was improving.

In Russia the situation was altogether different. Life grew harder for every category of citizen. War improved the lot of none. It brought stagnation to a vast area, to the wrecked industrial zone of the Donbass, the deserted prairies and marshes of Byelorussia, the cancelled villages of the Ukraine. On every hand there was evidence of creative work brought to an abrupt halt. The exploration and development of distant resources was suspended. In

place of the excitement, the thrilling victories of peace, in which the whole country had rejoiced, war brought a grinding dullness which even the salutes to the Red Army's triumphs did not relieve, since the thought of the cost in human life was always present. Temporarily the workers lost many of the material benefits the revolution had gained for them. There was little time to think of clubs or even schools in those remote places where the 1,360 evacuated factories were rebuilt during the winter of 1941. And always, there was the knowledge that at the front the Soviet Union's life blood was draining away.

As early as 1943 the Soviet government took steps to reawaken its peoples' great potentialities for peaceful construction, by publishing an interim plan for the restoration of liberated territory. It was not until after the war, however, that a general plan of reconstruction could be worked out.

The spirit in which this Five-Year Plan for the Restoration and Development of the National Economy of U.S.S.R. for 1946-1950, was conceived is, perhaps most clearly revealed by the fact that in the 35,000 word document with which it was presented to the nation, only four lines are given to reference to the damage sustained by the country's national economy during the war. "The victory of the U.S.S.R. in the Patriotic War was achieved at the cost of heavy sacrifice. The German occupants inflicted tremendous damage on our country." Nothing more.

The rest is a detailed, concrete, sober list of objectives for the future.

Before examining its salient points, let me briefly describe how planning works in the Soviet Union. In the first stage, the Soviet government decides the outline of the plan which is then left to the State Planning Commission to work out in consultation with the Ministries concerned and with the Central Committee of Trade Unions. Provisional

plans are then passed stage by stage down the administrative ladder to the primary production unit. At each stage suggestions are made and the separate plans filled out by the addition of details available at the different levels of consultation. Eventually meetings of factory workers and collective farmers have an opportunity of discussing their sector of the plan and, with their comments added, the plan then proceeds on its way up the ladder again, back to the State Planning Commission's office, from where it finally emerges in new form and after being subjected to public examination, becomes law.

This, however, is only the beginning. The Five-Year Plan has to be broken down into annual plans, quarterly plans, and in individual enterprises, monthly or ten-day plans. The State Planning Commission has the responsibility of keeping an eye on the way the plan is being fulfilled, intervening where it finds bottle-necks, keeping all interested ministries informed about the general progress of industrial production. In the Soviet view no planning organisation can function effectively unless it has powers and machinery to inspect, no plan is likely to be fulfilled unless it has the force of law, no government can get full co-operation from the workers in carrying out a plan unless they have had a hand in drawing it up, and are kept informed of its progress in application.

The principle aims of the Five-Year Plan introduced at the beginning of 1946 are to rehabilitate the devastated regions of the country, to recover the pre-war level in industry and agriculture and then considerably to surpass that level.

It is not within the scope of this book to examine in detail the methods which the Soviet government have adopted to fulfill its plans. The writer's concern is rather to draw attention to general trends, especially to those which originate in specifically post-war conditions. If one considers the

Five-Year plan with this object in view, then its most striking new feature is the emphasis laid on the production of consumer goods. True, priority is given to heavy industry and railway transport without which, as the planners point out, the rapid and effective recovery and development of the entire national economy of the U.S.S.R. would be impossible. But, for the first time in the history of Soviet planning, the provision of what was described as an abundance of consumer goods was made one of the basic aims of the plan, no longer to be left mainly to local industry, to co-operative societies and municipally run factories, but henceforth occupying a prominent place in the state's industrial output during the immediate future. The importance of this aspect of the plan was grasped by the Soviet press, which ranked the task of meeting the day-to-day needs of the people as equal in importance to that of expanding heavy industry, and called attention to the following paragraphs from the plan :

> " The production and sale to the population of high-grade food products, fabrics, clothing and footwear shall be expanded. Market stocks of goods handled by state and co-operative trade, including meat and fish products, sugar and confectionery, cotton, woollen and silk fabrics and leather footwear shall be greater in 1951 than in 1940. The manufacture and sale of fancy goods and household articles and utensils shall likewise be increased."

The production and sale of consumer goods scheduled for 1950 were given in the following quantities :—

Aluminium, enamelled porcelain and chinaware utensils	... 260 million
Samovars	... 200,000
Tumblers	... 160 million
Sewing machines ...	... 450,000
Clocks and Watches	... 7 million

Gramophones	...	... 1 million
Radio Sets	...	... 925,000
Motor Cycles	...	... 135,000
Bicycles ...	...	... 1 million, 50 thousand
Shot guns	...	... 350,000
Cameras ...	...	... 530,000

The plan called for the annual production of about five thousand million yards of cotton cloth in 1950, 170 million yards of woollen cloth, 330 million pairs of footwear, 580 million pairs of socks and stockings.

These figures do not take into account the production of local industry, small artels and workshops and home industry, nor of the workshops that are being set up in increasing quantities on the collective farms. They refer only to factory production under central administration. They do not include imported goods or deliveries on reparation account.

Foriegn comment on the Five-Year Plan has frequently taken the line that the priority given to the development of heavy industry and machine-building, which in spite of the increased emphasis laid on consumption goods production, remains the dominant feature of the plan, means that the Russian people are being condemned to further delay in the raising of their living standards. The weakness of this argument lies in its neglect of the fact that at Soviet society's present stage of development an effective improvement in living conditions can be brought about only as the result of a further extension of heavy industry. To take, for example, the question of transport, the key to most of Russia's problems. It was not a matter, primarily, of re-equipment or modernization that faced the Soviet government after the war. Its task was to resume the vast and constantly expanding programme of development on which the country had been engaged before the war, requiring

steel rails, powerful locomotives, hundreds of bridges, fleets of lorries and buses, and, essentially, more coal and oil. The extensions in progress to the Moscow Metropolitan Railway, urgently needed to relieve the city's serious transport problems, require three quarters of a million tons of iron tubing. It required fifty thousand tons of steel tubing to bring the gas of Saratov to Moscow, an enterprise that by introducing gas into 200,000 Moscow apartments is considerably alleviating living conditions in the city. It is in investment in great public works schemes such as these, schemes which must rest on a foundation of heavy industry rather than on a huge expansion of consumption goods industries that the life of the average citizen is being changed for the better. To put it in the form of a simile, the Russian people at the end of the war were in the position of a man whose home is three quarters built and who has to decide whether to expend the rest of his efforts on putting the roof on and installing the plumbing or on furnishing a basement room where he and his children could live cramped but cosy for the rest of their lives. Should the neighbours be surprised or worried if he chooses to take the first course?

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One of the achievements of the post-war Five-Year Plan of which the Soviet Union is most proud is the restoration of the Zaporozhye Steel Mills, producing metal for the bodies of the new models of motor-cars that began to emerge from factories in Moscow and Gorky during 1947.

One day in the Spring of 1944 a Dakota in which a group of correspondents was returning from the Crimean front flew along the course of the lower Dnieper, in the direction of Kharkov. The vast naked steppe below was hideously marked with the jagged dog-toothed lines of anti-tank ditches where, a few months before, the Germans had

tried to halt the headlong Russian advance across the Southern Ukraine. The battlefields, torn by concentrated bombardment, looked almost insignificant. Westward, as far as the eye could see across the level Ukrainian steppe, stretched the trail of the Russian tanks, thousands of tracks interweaving like the loose strands of an old rope.

We had come from the battlefields of the Chersonese peninsula where a German and Rumanian army had been destroyed. I suppose that most of us, so infectious is the atmosphere of victory, shared something of the triumphant mood of the haggard, battle-stained Russians who led us through the hushed streets of Sevastopol to the edge of the sea where thousands of bodies tossed. Each day we set out from a beautifully situated hotel at Yalta in cars decorated with laburnum and lilac to inspect smashed fortifications, to photograph beaches littered with the swollen bodies of horses and men.

War is a simplification of the relations between man and his brother, and while it lasts it is as well to beware of pity. All these dead Germans, one had to remind oneself, were called Fritz. You were asking for trouble if you picked up a blood-stained pay-book and found that Fritz was really Walter Fischer, born in Mittenwald 3/8/24. " I never look in their eyes," a young Russian grave-digger answered me at Stalingrad when I asked him how he felt as he dragged the German dead out of the cellars.

Yet, however much one steeled one's heart and joined the cheering, sometimes feelings of dismay crept over one at the sight of this holocaust, of this Sevastopol where so many Russians and Ukrainians, Germans and Rumanians, picked out so casually from their peaceful occupations, had been as casually killed. You asked yourself how long it would take Europe to recover from this gigantic draining away of its human resources, and what would happen, once war was over to the spirit of men for whom the memory

of Sevastopol was not of a pleasant dazzling-white port but of a hell where opposing armies lay at grips for months.

Waste of another kind was in evidence as we flew over the Southern Ukraine. Here labour had been squandered on fortifications that had not even served their purpose, fertile land was lying neglected for the third spring in succession. The West had nothing comparable with the visible signs of how man had abandoned his peaceful activities that met the eye at every turn in the Soviet Union at war. The British, as it were, left a well-built house to dwell in the camps of war ; the Russian people were still at work building theirs when they received their marching orders. And again the question posed itself ; would those who survived have the strength to turn again to the task of construction ?

This question was presented in an acute form when the plane flew low over Zaporozhye and revealed the wreckage of perhaps the most spectacular achievement of Soviet construction, the Dnieper Dam and the group of factories that had been built near its hydro-electric station. I remember the chill of horror that invaded the plane as we dipped earthwards and saw the remains of the homes where three hundred thousand people once lived.

The story of Zaporozhye may be told in the fate of one of its main factories, the metallurgical plant named after Ordzhonikidze. It is a particularization of the history of Soviet construction, loss and reconstruction. It provides an unequivocal answer to the question whether the Soviet people have the power and the will to rebuild their land ?

Built under the Second Five-Year Plan, the plant received the name of " Pearl of the Southern metal industry " at a period when the Soviet people were celebrating victories on the construction front as mile-stones passed on the way to greater comfort and security. This and the other works that arose on the left bank of the Dnieper after the con-

struction of the Hydro-Electric station, accounted for the spectacular rise in the population of Zaporozhye from 47,800 in 1924 to over 300,000 in 1937. The steel-mills were of exceptional importance to the national economy of the U.S.S.R., since Zaporozhye was the only place where cold-rolled steel for the automobile industry was produced by a continuous rolling process. On the eve of the war the plant was equipped with three blast furnaces, one of which was barely finished, ten open-hearth furnaces and sheet-rolling departments for both cold and hot processes. Its slabbing-mill, 13,000 tons in weight, 160 yards long, handling thirty railway truck loads of metal an hour, was Europe's biggest. The entire factory covered an area of 430 hectares.

The creation of new socialist cities such as Zaporozhye was the most tangible evidence the Soviet Union provided its people, and those who visited them from abroad, of the revolution's achievements. How much misunderstanding of the aims of the Soviet government, how much under-estimation of Soviet Russia's strength, may be attributed to the fact that when the world really began to take an interest in this country so much of this evidence had been swept away by the tide of war ! Soviet reluctance to throw its frontiers open to foreign visitors in the immediate post-war period is more easily understood when one takes into account that what almost all this country was most proud of was destroyed or disfigured. It is not so much the story of its sufferings in the war as of its powers of recuperation that the Russian people wish the world to read.

The new Zaporozhye was a model city. Its workers lived lives far removed from conditions in Moscow, for here the authorities had been able to plan from the beginning, to control the intake of new workers according to accommodation available, to map out from year to year the spread of the city along the Dnieper's banks, the provision of parks and playing fields. The steel mills, the aluminium works, the

Baranov aircraft factory, brand new and highly mechanized, attracted the elite of Russia's engineers and mechanics. Each year saw a shrinkage in the area of Zaporozhye's " Shanghai," as the settlement of clay barracks built to house the construction workers was called locally. The standard home was a two room flat.

The German army reached the opposite bank of the Dnieper on August 18th, 1941. Here their headlong advance from Kiev was halted. For forty-five days the evacuation of Zaporozhye was carried out under artillery and bombing attack. From the metallurgical plant alone four to five hundred vanloads of machinery were moved daily to the East, principally to Magnitorgorsk in the Urals. They dismantled and moved the slabbing mill and all the other rolling mills, they saved 8,000 motors, 18,000 motor generators, 57 thousand transformers—18,000 van loads in all. What remained, principally the blast furnaces, coking battery and electrothermal station were put out of operation. The town was not destroyed on evacuation.

The man who was responsible for dismantling and transferring this huge works was Anatoli Kuzmin, director of the Zaporozhye steel mills since their inception. The man who was responsible for receiving this avalanche of equipment was V. E. Dymshitz, chief of the Magnitogorsk Building Trust.

" I am sending you this factory so that the Germans shall not have it " Kuzmin wrote to Dymshitz. " And I am going to keep it until you are ready to use it again," Dymshitz replied.

Today Anatoli Kuzmin is again director at Zaporozhye.

Two years later in the autumn of 1943 Zaporozhye was liberated. The town, the workers' settlements, the factory buildings had been systematically and most effectively destroyed by the Germans as part of their plan to devastate

the Ukraine so that its industrial recovery would be a matter not of years but of several decades.

There were few signs that the challenge had been answered when our Dakota circled over the site of Zaporozhye in the spring of 1944. Work was going on among the ruins but it was clearance work. Not until the winter was over had it been possible to survey the extent of the damage sustained by the metallurgical plant. The restoration of the steel-mills had been placed in the second line of reconstruction since so much of the equipment and building material required had to come from factories which were also in ruins. The plant's power, Donbass coal and the Dnieper dam, had to be guaranteed. Krivoi Rog, where much of the ore came from was but a few months liberated from the Germans. Novo-Kramatorsk which had built the original machinery for the mills had suffered little less than Zaporozhye. Already in those early days when the Red Army was still fighting on Soviet soil a strict priority list was in operation for the rebuilding of the metal industry of the southern regions.

But already the machinery was coming back from Magnitogorsk, and perhaps of all the details that we saw in those few moments over ruined Zaporozhye, the most auspicious was the goods train crawling towards the city from the North. Not all the equipment was returning. Some had already been put into use at Magnitogorsk where under Dymshitz' supervision two new blast furnaces had gone up in record time during the war. Some had been damaged beyond repair. The men who handled the unpacking of the machinery lived in dug-outs in "Shanghai" during the winter of 1943. The historians of the war will not spare many lines for the services rendered their country by this group of highly-skilled technicians living virtually alone in the dark ruins of a city beside the frozen Dnieper, day in, day out, sorting, measuring, polishing delicate parts of

intricate machinery, wrapping them in linen and storing them in safety against the days when they would be needed. Without these "little cogs in the war effort" as Stalin feelingly referred to them in 1946, the Zaporozhye steel mills would not have been able to roll out 0.6 millimetres hardened steel-alloy in 1947, for the Soviet automobile industry.

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In 1945, a few months after the war, the reconstruction of the factories, on whose output the re-equipping of Zaporozhye depended, had reached a point which enabled the Government to promote the steel mills to the first category. The occasion for this was the drawing up of a five year plan for the Soviet motor industry, envisaging an annual output in 1950 of 428,000 lorries and 65,600 cars. This extension has a direct bearing on the solution of the problem of raising the living standards of the Soviet people as a whole. While the rivers and railways form the arteries of the Soviet Union, along which raw materials, and fuel, flow to the factories, the roads form the veinous system for the supply of food for the fast growing cities. To a greater extent, probably than any other country of Europe, Russian trade depends on motor transport; and the development of the flow of trade between town and country, without which the standard of living cannot rise far above its present level, requires first and foremost, trucks and light vans. Hence the importance attached by the Government to a planned development of the automobile industry, the first Soviet industry to receive a five year plan of its own after the war.

This new development was reflected in an immediate raising of the tempo of clearance work on the Zaporozhye site. The scale of this work can be judged by the fact that

before the first series of the mills could be restored, one million cubic metres of rubble and earth had to be removed, thirty-five thousand tons of demolished metal dismantled and thousands of tons of distorted framework shifted from the site. Little was heard of this work while it was in progress. Like most of the great projects launched with the post-war five year plan, the first year was one of trial and error, of frustration, delay and shortages. The steel mills were particularly sensitive to the effect of shortcomings in other branches of the national economy, for they relied on supplies from some sixty factories situated as far apart as Vitebsk and Tomsk, Taganrog and Leningrad.

But not all the blame was placed on the sources of supply when, in 1947, a stinging article appeared in *Pravda* criticising the Zaporozhye branch of the Ukrainian Communist Party for allowing conditions in the metallurgical works to drift to a highly unsatisfactory point. In particular, it was pointed out, the rolling mill equipment had not even been assembled at the beginning of the year. In spite of various measures taken the previous autumn, including the appointment, as chief of the construction, of V. Dymshitz from Magnitogorsk, and the arrival of substantial quantities of cement, glass and timber, the construction was way behind schedule and the chances of the Gorky and Moscow automobile plants getting metal for the bodies of the new Victory and ZIS cars remained poor.

Coming soon after severe criticism of conditions at the great Chelyabinsk metal works and other well-known plants, this revelation of short-comings in the fulfilment of the plan caused more than one ambassador in Moscow to report to his Government that the Five-Year Plan was in the doldrums. Others, however, remembering what had happened at similar stages in earlier Five-Year Plans, bided their time.

A *Pravda* analysis of the causes of the trouble at

Zaporozhye listed them as shortage of machine parts, bricks and manpower, and the blame, as usual in such cases, was laid on the local Communist Party organisation, an illuminating example of the heavy responsibility that local Communist branches have to take. Many knuckles were publicly rapped, including ministerial knuckles. Factories which were failing to keep delivery dates were pilloried in the press.

Then things really began to move. The matter was raised at a meeting of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party in Moscow. It went before the Politburo. Andrei Zhdanov took it in hand personally. The Council of Ministers approved a new time schedule. The restoration of the first section of the steel mills, now due before the end of September, 1947 was rated a top priority.

By June the first blast furnace and the diesel electric plant were completed. When the engineers came to examine the damage to this furnace, they found the top dangerously out of true. Instead of stripping it, however, they used a unique method of repair. The furnace was sliced in two horizontally, supports were welded on to each side and the nine hundred ton top was raised up on nine hydraulic jacks.

In July the slabbing mill went into production. In August the hot-rolling mill was completed. By then four million bricks a month were reaching the works, and in September, on schedule, the cold-rolling mill went into operation, thus restoring the whole series of operations by which ore is transformed into hardened steel sheeting.

The change in tempo coincided with the general change for the better in the spirit of the Soviet working class that occurred during the spring of 1947, a factor of far-reaching importance, both in domestic and international affairs. It was just about that time that a foreign ambassador in Moscow was attempting to convince some of his colleagues that the Five-Year Plan could not possibly succeed because according

to this ambassador's sources of information, it only allowed for the production of 250 typewriters a year! But already in the factories, if not in the chanceries of foreign embassies, the Five-Year Plan entering its second year was beginning to make itself felt as a dynamic force replacing the fits and starts of 1946 with a smoother, more co-ordinated effort.

To Zaporozhye came turbines from Leningrad on the Baltic, from Taganrog on the Sea of Azov; cement from the Urals and metal from the Donbass, oil from Trans-Caucasia and Grozny. Kramatorsk supplied over one half of the machinery required for the rolling mills, though its factories, too, had been wrecked. Yaroslavl and Tomsk sent electric motors for the factory's 14 sub-stations, lathes arrived from Vitebsk and Bashkiria, pumps from Melitopol. Factories that had been demolished during the war were co-ordinating their production with more fortunate ones situated behind the battle-lines.

Because of the special importance of the job, an exception was made to the general rule according to which building units prepare their own cadres of skilled workers for individual jobs. To Zaporozhye qualified workers were directed by their ministries from all over the country, from Azerbaijan and Georgia, Stalinsk, Chelyabinsk, Siberia and the Donbass. The flower of the metal industry was concentrated on this job during the summer of 1947. Three thousand five hundred machine fitters, two and a half thousand electricians were on the factory's pay-roll in August. At one time there were 13,000 workers employed on the installation of the rolling mill, 10,000 on the blast furnace and the electro-thermal station. Thirty-five different building and assembly organizations worked simultaneously. Under the roof of the main shop, a kilometre long, greater in area than Moscow's Red Square, worked glaziers, painters, electricians; on the walls, steam, water and compressed air pipes were being installed; below, the

rolling mill with its auxiliary pumps, motors and generators, was being fitted, and underground the men were laying oil-pipes and cables. Work that would have taken eight months before the war was done in three.

Soviet industrial history has provided many examples of almost superhuman efforts by labour, and a certain amount of caution is required in apportioning praise for such achievements. It is not certain, for instance, whether the breakneck speed at which the half-million cubic metres of concrete for the Dnieper dam were laid in one building season in 1930 was so much a triumph for the management as for the workers, whose tremendous enthusiasm and selfless attitude evoked praise from foreign observers at the time. The rebuilding of the Zaporozhye steel mills also provided evidence of this spirit. As many as fifty thousand volunteer workers from other factories and local inhabitants gave up their Sundays to clear rubble and lay bricks during the construction. But the nature of the task of re-equipping an up-to-date steel mill requires more than enthusiasm. The workers were required to co-operate in a highly complex operation in which the tasks of thirty-nine different construction units had to be co-ordinated. The introduction of "storm-tactics," so familiar in Soviet industrial methods, would have been dangerous unless applied to the whole job evenly, and, indeed, it seems that it was precisely in the avoidance of storm tactics and in the substitution for them of a rhythm in work hitherto rarely met in Soviet construction, that success was attained. If this reading of events is correct, it means that at Zaporozhye a new standard was set which may have important repercussions in the future stages of the implementation of the Five-Year Plan, of which the re-opening of this steel mill was the first major achievement.

Anatoli Kuzmin and V. E. Dymshitz, who worked together on this job attribute the success to two factors, the

broad use of the " graph system " and the high quality of manpower employed. When the Government drew up a six-month schedule for the completion of repair of the first section of the mills, the construction unit broke this down to a day-to-day level, printed it and distributed it to every foreman, party and trade union leader in the works. Drawn up in graphic form, it was corrected every twenty-four hours, and provided a means of keeping each worker informed not only of what was required of him during the shift but also of the tactical position of every unit on the front, to express the situation in military terms. It is, indeed, not far-fetched to see lessons of wartime experience applied in several ways on this job, particularly in the absence of those exhortatory appeals and slogans generally to be found in Soviet factories but markedly absent at Zaporozhye; again, in the preparation of many details away from the site, a form of pre-assembly that avoided congestion in the main shop. Perhaps some significance may be attached to the fact that the Secretary of the Zaporozhye Communist Party Committee, is Major-General Brezhnev, formerly of the Third Ukrainian front and that a high proportion of the skilled engineers working there were demobilised officers of the Red Army. Among them was Mark Neduzhko, who laid a petrol pipe below the surface of the Ladoga lake to supply beleaguered Leningrad, (an " Operation Pluto " that went practically unreported during the war). At Zaporozhye he devised a form of telescopic tubing which saved much time. Wartime experience in metal salvage was also applied broadly. Some 10,000 tons was retrieved of the 15,000 found in wreckage in the cold-rolling department. Local rubble was treated to manufacture a new synthetic wallboard. Ingenuity, co-ordination, the application of lessons learned in the war; these are no doubt some of the causes for the punctual fulfilment of Zaporozhye's plans. But there are other contributory

factors, a glance at which may reveal aspects of Soviet labour conditions, typical of the country as a whole, in this post-war period. They fall into three categories, according to their bearing on the related problems of incentives, labour recruitment and labour training.

* * * * *

The idea persists in some circles that the Soviet system of differential rewards for labour is a betrayal of socialist principles. The Soviet view on this vexed question was put so precisely by Stalin as long ago as 1934 that one cannot do better than to quote his words, especially as there has been no change since then in Soviet practice or theory. " These people," Stalin told the 17th Congress of the Communist Party, referring to a section of the party, " these people evidently think that Socialism calls for equalization for levelling the requirements and the individual lives of the members of society. Needless to say, such an assumption has nothing in common with Marxism, with Leninism. By equality, Marxism means, not equalization of individual requirements and individual life, but the abolition of classes, i.e., (a) the equal emancipation of all working people from exploitation after the capitalists have been overthrown and expropriated; (b) the equal abolition for all of private property in the means of production after they have been converted into the property of the whole of society; (c) the equal duty of all to work according to their ability, and the equal right of all working people to receive remuneration according to the amount of work performed (a Socialist society); (d) the equal duty of all to work according to their ability, and the equal right of all working people to receive

remuneration according to their needs (a Communist society). Furthermore, Marxism proceeds from the assumption that people's tastes and requirements are not, and cannot, be identical, equal, in quality or in quantity, either in the period of Socialism or in the period of Communism. That is the Marxian conception of equality. Marxism has never recognised, nor does it recognize, any other equality. To draw from this the conclusion that Socialism calls for equalization, for the levelling of the requirements of the members of society, for the levelling of their tastes and of their individual lives—that according to the plans of the Marxists all should wear the same clothes and eat the same dishes in the same quantity—is to deal in vulgarities and to slander Marxism. It is time it was understood that Marxism is an enemy of equalization."

Two years later Stalin laboured this point when he spoke to the first All-Union Stakhanovite Conference, a movement of working men and women which had set itself the aim of surpassing previous technical standards. " Some people " Stalin said then, " think that Socialism can be consolidated by a certain equalization of people's material conditions, based on a poor man's standard of living. That is not true. That is a petty-bourgeois conception of Socialism. In point of fact, Socialism can succeed only on the basis of a high productivity of labour, higher than under capitalism, on the basis of an abundance of products and of articles of consumption of all kinds, on the basis of a prosperous and cultured life for all members of society. The cultural and technical level of the working class is not as yet a high one—the distinction between mental and manual labour still exists—the productivity of labour is still not high enough to ensure an abundance of articles of consumption and as a result society is obliged to distribute articles of consumption not in accordance with the needs of its members, but in accordance with the work they per-

form for society."

The principles Stalin enunciated in the '30's have been applied ever since. During periods, such as the war, when grave shortages were experienced in goods of the most essential character, the difference in living standards has narrowed, since the Government has made itself responsible through the ration system of guaranteeing a minimum standard and has extended a much stricter control over the distribution of goods. In easier times, such as those in which the Soviet Union is now entering, the gap has widened. At the same time, as general prosperity increases so does the provision of amenities available to all, irrespective of income. There is no country in the world where luxuries are so expensive, public services so cheap as in the Soviet Union.

A guaranteed supply of food was probably the most effective material incentive to work during the war, when most people were relying on canteens at their places of employment for their main meal of the day, and on the " closed " shops, to which they were attached according to their jobs, for their clothes and household utensils. It was customary to surrender food coupons for a proportion of the food provided in canteens, especially for fats, and bread was not often issued. But, by and large, canteen meals were supplementary to rationed food. There was much unevenness in quality and quantity of meals provided by different organisations, the result, not of favouritism but of personal initiative or ingenuity in the supply departments and often of quite fortuitous causes. I knew one supply department director who used to stand in a queue all night during the winter of 1941 to get extra meat and bones from a meat packing plant in Moscow. Factories whose lorries made country runs were well placed. Many organisations in the towns came to arrangements with collective farms, then short of labour, under which their workers

lent a hand at week-ends in return for contributions to the canteen larder. A year or so after the war an investigation into farm conditions revealed that many of these organizations had dug themselves in too securely for the farmer's liking. Most of the land returned to collective farms in 1946 and 1947 was described as having been unlawfully acquired by town organizations.

But a guaranteed meal was not the only material incentive offered to workers. The shortage of manufactured goods* caused the adoption of what was in effect a ration-system within a ration-system. Frequently the only chance the workers had of using the points which were issued to them was when they received an "order," in other words an official authorization to the "closed" shops to honour the points. These authorizations were given either as a form of bonus for good work, or to meet special cases of need. I remember, for example, the case of a woman who was reprimanded for unpunctuality at her factory. She explained that she had been visiting the market in search of shoes for her child, who was unable to attend school for lack of them. The reprimand stood but the grounds for it were changed. She should have approached the welfare department of the factory's trade union who would have given her authorization to purchase shoes at the factory's own shop, at a price far lower than that of the free market. But not all "closed" shops were so happily placed to meet the requirements of the needy.

The principles governing distribution of the strictly limited supplies of manufactured goods allotted to the supply departments of factories and other organizations amounted to this; for articles of an essential nature distribution was according to need, for articles described as luxuries, distribution was in the form of reward. The difference

*In 1942 only 9% of the country's output of textiles, 27% of its shoe production were available for distribution to the civilian population.

between essentials and luxuries varied, of course, with the times. In 1942 and 1943, people would put in many hours over-time for an extra few pounds of potatoes. A British Embassy courier arriving at a Moscow station in those times found that the equivalent of ten pounds of His Majesty's Government's funds made no impression on the porters, until a bottle of vodka was involved. Five years later the issue of a sack or two of potatoes was a perquisite that every Moscow worker expected; and a tumbler of vodka a fairly normal accompaniment to a workman's lunch.

As conditions improved in the post-war period, money regained its purchasing power both in the controlled market, where for the first time ration cards were fully and regularly honoured, and in the so-called "commercial" market. Manufactured goods, extra food, and tobacco came within the reach of those workers who without exerting themselves unduly, earned the average wage which rose from 375 Roubles a month in 1941 to 573 Roubles in 1944, and to nearly 800 Roubles in 1947, not including overtime money and premiums. For those who qualified for bonuses or were in the higher income categories there was more to spend their money on. But though this was satisfactory from every point of view, the situation contained one element of danger. For the government striving for the fulfilment of the Five Year plan, it was of paramount importance that the slight easing of the conditions in which the mass of the workers lived should not lead to a slackening of effort. The stabilization of the working week at 48 hours instead of the 40 hours fixed by the Constitution, and an increase in the price of bread and some other foods were the most important measures taken to forestall this. As their result people had to work longer before they began to earn overtime rates, a substantially greater proportion of the average wage was taken up in covering the cost of rationed

food, and higher productivity was required before this average could be earned. Severe as these measures may appear, there were some alleviating factors. Simultaneously with the rise in food prices, energetic measures were taken by the trade union movement to improve conditions in canteens; the workers' rights to a month's paid holiday after eleven months' employment were fully restored, together with those amenities obtainable at factory clubs. Taking Sundays and public holidays into account the Soviet worker rested two days for every seven worked. Further, piece-rates had remained unchanged since before the war though the productivity of the average worker had increased. In some factories the majority of unskilled workers were qualifying for substantial bonuses by producing twice as much as was required of them by the norm.

The increase in the rouble's purchasing power enabled the authorities to revert to the practice of making increased cash earning the most general form of premium. Workers who had during the war received rewards in kind leaving them with the task of converting this, usually through private channels, into other goods of which they may have stood in greater need, were, soon after the war, to be seen crowding the shops where a relatively abundant choice of merchandise appeared during the winter of 1945. Pots and pans and household china were the first types of goods to come, followed by electrical equipment, and towards the end of 1946, of cloth. Furniture remained abnormally expensive. 1947 was characterized by the appearance of luxuries like gramophones, several kinds of radios, and motor-cycles. Boots and shoes, goloshes, winter felt boots, and clothes remained expensive in the open shops, and the notable improvement in clothing during the winter of 1946 must be attributed to more plentiful supplies in the "closed" shops where an 'order' system was still in operation.

The writer was visiting the Donbass when the Soviet

Government introduced its changes in the cost of rationed food, a preparatory move to the complete abolition of rationing. It was clear from the details of wage scales and bonuses that were given us in this highly industrialized area, that the effect of these changes was going to impinge on the workers' lives in a widely varying degree. We found, too, that the practice of offering cash premiums for increased productivity was so widespread that a calculation of living standards based on normal wages was quite misleading For example, the basic wage of workers on the blast furnaces at Makeyevka was given as 40 roubles a day, yet when we came to put casual questions to workers we met during a tour of the mills, they mentioned actual earnings of up to 132 roubles a day, including personal and collective premiums. These premiums were calculated as follows. A production norm was established which in the case of the department we were investigating was 80% of production capacity. This was a calculation made solely for the purpose of fixing piece rates since the department's plan called for considerably higher production than the 80%. Nevertheless, the qualification for receiving premiums was improvement on the figure of 80%. Between 80% and 90% the workers received normal wages plus 5%. Between 90% and 100% they received normal wages plus 10% and for every improvement on the furnaces' estimated capacity their bonus was 25% of their normal wage. In addition to this, special collective premiums were given when there was an excess of production over plan.

In the following year a campaign was launched for a raising of averages. In a case like the above, this meant that the production norm of 80% was re-adjusted according to the record of achievement. Such a raising of norms, which cannot be done arbitrarily but only as the result of bargaining with the trade unions, is a consequence of the increasing productivity of Soviet labour, and as this increase

is reflected in a greater abundance of goods and hence in a falling of prices, it provides its own compensation for what is, in effect, a re-adjustment of wages to the falling cost of living. We found the miners of the Donbass receiving preferential treatment in regard both of food and consumers' goods. At a mine at Kadievka which was being repaired after flooding and destruction, the lowest wage of 400 roubles a month was being brought up to an average of between 600-700 by bonuses. In addition to normal miner's rations which, for underground workers, included one kilogramme of bread daily, a premium of 200 grammes of bread was given to all workers fulfilling the plan's quota. All underground workers were getting an issue of 100 grammes of fat and 10 grammes of sugar before each shift. For the first 5% of overfulfilment of norm, extra pay was at the normal rate, for the second 5% the miner got double pay, for the third 5% triple pay. In calculating retirement pensions, actual earnings including premiums were taken into account for establishing the size of the pensions, which usually consisted of about 70% of earnings at the time of retirement. The miners of the Donbass paid rent at about one quarter of the Moscow rate and the 25 kopecks per square metre monthly, which is a rough average, included water, electricity and coal. In winter the coal grant was three-quarters of a ton per stove per month, in summer 9 cwt. Dormitory accommodation with from 6 to 9 persons sharing a room was provided free of charge to unmarried workers. A typical home of a married miner with two children consisted of one room and a kitchen, perhaps 16 square metres of living space. Since autumn, 1947, the mines have been placed under the obligation of providing individual homes for foremen, engineers and higher officials.

At a furniture factory in Voroshilovgrad we found wages among women workers varying between 250 and 900 roubles a month. The lowest figure was being paid to unskilled

workers, cleaners, messengers, etc. A worker with the first degree of qualification was being paid 450 roubles—500 roubles. Others received as much as 1,200, including bonuses.

The raising of rationed food prices brought the cost of food obtainable on a worker's ration card up to about 340 roubles a month, and thus had serious consequences for the lower-paid workers. For others, however, it was more than offset by the simultaneous drop in the price of manufactured goods. Not infrequently we found rank-and-file workers who, after using their ration cards and clothing points in the " closed " shops had sums varying between 700—1,200 roubles a month for spending in the " commercial " shops or the free markets.

An examination of the prices prevailing in such trade channels however, served to remind us how fictitious was the impression of opulence made by a wad of Soviet bank notes. Rye bread that cost 3 roubles 20 kopecks a kilogramme if bought on the ration, was sold at 7 roubles a kilogramme in the commercial shops, where it was rarely obtainable after the failure of the 1946 harvest. In the markets of the Donbass towns in the autumn of 1946, it was costing 25 roubles a kilogramme. In these markets, beef was 60 roubles a kilogramme, butter 190 roubles a kilogramme, eggs fifty roubles a dozen, and milk 16 roubles a litre. It must be emphasized that these high prices were not the result of speculative cornering, or of farmers holding the towns at their mercy. By trading through the " commercial " shops the state possessed the means of breaking the prices on the markets drawing their supplies from collective farms and small-holdings. Dire want, the direct consequences of the war, was the main reason for high costs in those trade channels where price was determined by the laws of demand and supply. The failure of the 1946 harvest obliged the Ukrainian authorities to reduce the bread ration

for children from 400 to 300 grammes a day, for dependents from 300 to 250 grammes. According to figures provided to U.N.R.R.A. officials in Kiev, the resources of edible fats and oils for the Ukraine in 1946 was 192,400 tons, allowing for an annual per capita consumption of less than 5 kilogrammes compared with some 24 kilogrammes before the war.*

As for the high prices of manufactured goods sold in government shops, these too were the direct result of shortage. Until they were being produced in sufficiently large quantities to go an appreciable way towards meeting demand the government did not apparently intervene to reduce the prices of manufactured goods on " commercial " sale by subsidies. It continued, however, to use its peculiarly flexible financial powers to keep prices down in the " closed " shops, and thus protected the workers from fluctuations in the " commercial " market until at the end of 1947 it was able to abolish rationing and to reduce " commercial " prices by about 2/3rds.

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Two years after the beginning of the post-war Five-Year plan the Soviet Government wiped out the ration-card system overnight and introduced a single-price system throughout the length and breadth of the Soviet Union. The world was provided with yet another of those vast measures, startlingly simple in appearance though in fact highly complicated, which it has come to associate with the Soviet form of government. And once again the method of presentation was designed to bring every detail of the measure home to the ordinary citizen. Compare

* Owing to the cessation of U.N.R.R.A. deliveries in 1947, the average annual consumption per head fell to 4 kilogrammes—about 2¾ ounces per week.

the lucid, terse phraseology spread over four or five pages of the daily Soviet newspapers of December 15th, 1947, with the way in which a parliamentary bill is drawn up in the countries of Western Europe and you will learn how adept the Soviet government has become in the practice of taking the people into its confidence and inviting their interest in matters which deeply affect their lives.

The changes that were introduced in mid-December, 1947 were heralded by rumour. Already during November it was being whispered that there was to be a change of currency simultaneous with the abolition of the ration-card system. It was fairly clear to everybody who thought about the matter that if rationing was to be lifted there would necessarily have to be some measures for curtailing the purchasing power of the rich.

The government, after all, was abolishing rationing in a period which was far from one of plenty and prosperity, and if the workers were not to suffer as the result of the minority who had roubles to burn and who could be relied on to buy up an unfair share of the available products if they were given the chance, then some means had to be devised to cancel the purchasing power of those roubles. That was obvious to all, and consequently in the weeks before the monetary reforms were introduced, Moscow, and presumably the rest of the U.S.S.R., indulged in a wave of buying. A few acute minds, noticing that there had been a substantial increase in government advertising of the savings-banks, and arguing that it was highly unlikely that the state would choose to default on the eve of the municipal elections, scheduled to take place before the end of the year, placed all their spare cash in savings accounts. Their foresight and confidence in the regime was to be amply rewarded.

Others however bought, and bought at very high prices, for there had been no serious reduction in the prices of

furniture, furs, jewelry and other luxury goods offered in the antique-shops. Moscow was a curious sight in those days, with queues forming outside the second-hand shops, people scrambling to buy pianos, silver, and huge quantities of wine. In a few days a great deal of " bad " money must have found its way into the State Bank, and a countless quantity of luxury goods transferred from the shelves to private ownership. Even the bust of Napoleon which I had grown to consider a fixture in the " commission shop " in Stoleshnikov Street, found a buyer that week. The mass of the people were not concerned in this rush of buying, for the large rouble fortunes had accumulated in relatively few hands. They had served their owners little purpose for unearned fortunes carried with them no privileges to buy at controlled prices, and any ostentatious display of wealth by persons who are known not to be in orthodox employment is apt to provoke the attention of the authorities in a society that tolerates differences in living standards only if it knows they are related to honest work.

On Sunday evening, December 14th, the Soviet radio burst into a call-signal that had not been heard in the streets of Moscow since VJ day. Crowds gathered in complete silence. A ten-year old child with whom I had been for a stroll said " Surely, its not the war again." People responded to a very Soviet Russian desire to be in company when hearing important announcements and many left their home radios to congregate in the dusk on the streets.

The news they were given was, in its briefest form, an assurance from the Government and Communist Party that faith was being kept with the people as concerned the promise to pass on benefits accruing to the state during the progress of reconstruction, to the greatest possible number of people. From the point of view of the average citizen the most important changes announced ran in this order; first, the ration system was abolished for both food and

manufactured goods; second, food previously sold at extremely high prices was henceforth to be obtainable at the same level as food that had been rationed—in other words he could henceforth get as much as he wanted without paying more dearly, whereas before he sometimes had to pay five or six times more for food bought " off the ration "; third, the cost of manufactured goods, especially of clothes and household articles, was being slashed to a third or a half of previous prices; and finally, he was going to lose some of his savings and most of the cash that he had in his pocket.

And, naturally, since the Soviet man is like any other in this respect, his first reaction on hearing this news was to spend whatever money he had in his pocket during the few hours that remained before its value fell to one tenth.

This was more easily said than done on a Moscow Sunday night, as most of the shops had closed, the theatres and cinemas were already full and the restaurants and cafes were as usual crowded. But the Russians are an ingenious people. They stormed the buffets in the railway stations, they discovered that they could buy season tickets for the next quarter on the Metro and stood in long queues to do so. They invaded the small photographers' studios that stay open late in case someone wants an urgent passport photograph. They took advantage of the all-night pharmacies and invested in thermometers and bought enough aspirins to cure headaches for the rest of their lives. There were policemen on the doors of the restaurants.

It was an extremely good-humoured crowd. No doubt there were some who hurried home to count the frayed, folded roubles under the mattress, but, by and large, the sacrifices fell on those who could best afford to bear them, and the only people to suffer permanently from the new measures were those who had shown what they thought of the Soviet government by withdrawing all their money from

the banks as soon as rumours began to circulate. They, without exception, lost nine-tenths of their wealth. As for the others who had retained their money in the banks, over 80% of them were unaffected by the decree, since they held less than 3,000 roubles and were thus compensated at par, while of the rest the majority held less than 10,000 roubles and thus lost 25% of their savings, considerably less than they stood to gain by the fall in the cost of living brought about by the reduction of prices.

These reforms completely transformed Soviet trade and affected the lives of everybody in the land. The abolition of rationing was particularly beneficial to the poorer-off for though the Soviet rationing system was highly scientific, being based on nutritional standards and on the principle of providing the right food to those who needed it most, it was most complicated and required a large operating staff as well as a great deal of the consumer's time. Moreover, the vagaries in the distribution system often put the customer at the mercy of the shop-keeper who was obliged to force on him substitute articles, sometimes in unusual quantities. There was one week, for instance, when a family of my acquaintance received 64 eggs, after six eggless months. Thirty eight of them were bad. People got into the habit of buying everything they were entitled to, whether they needed it or not. The abolition of rationing brought with it new opportunities for greater choice, and one of the most remarkable sights of the first few days after it came into effect were the crowds of shoppers drifting slowly through abundantly stocked shops, gaping at a wealth of goods the like of which had not been seen since before the war, and which, in the winter of 1947, perhaps only Belgium, Switzerland and Sweden could match. One could read plainly written on the faces of these people, as they fingered the brand new money in which they had been paid their December wages, the thought that they could henceforth

take their choice from this unaccustomed variety of merchandize, no longer priced far beyond their reach.

There is no gainsaying that prices are still high in Russia. However, one should not underestimate the effect of the re-introduction of variety into diet. Rationed food had been insufferably dull for over six years, with the constant issues of dish-water-grey maccaroni, puce salami, and scraggy beef. Since the abolition of rationing, it has become possible once again to use the "shop-round-the-corner," to buy in small quantities when and where one liked, to pick and choose, and—unheard of act—even to leave the shop and go elsewhere if dissatisfied. Almost overnight, service reappeared in Moscow shops and jaded saleswomen who had looked at one as if you were another sack of cabbages being brought in greeted you with inviting smiles.

The introduction of the single-price system in the shops had its effects on the markets. The following table lists the prices decreed on December 15th, 1947 with those current in the free markets a month previously :—

Article.		*Quantity.*	*New Price.*	*Old Price. (off ration)*
Bread	...	kilo	R. 5	R. 60
Beef	...	„	R. 30	R. 75
Butter, fresh	...	„	R. 64	R. 210
Fish	...	„	R. 12	R. 50
Apples	...	„	R. 12 to 18	R. 40 to 50
Milk	...	litre	R. 3 to 4	R. 14
Eggs	...	ten	R. 12 to 16	R. 40 to 50
Coffee	...	kilo	R. 75	R. 100
Potatoes	...	„	R. 2.50	R. 4

All food was from thenceforward obtainable in unlimited quantities at the previous ration price, except milk and eggs which were virtually unobtainable on the ration, though

priced lower than after the abolition of rationing.

The income of an average industrial worker in the first quarter of 1948 was given in official publications as about 780 roubles a month, exclusive of bonuses and overtime money. In calculating family budgets in the Soviet Union it is necessary to take into account that both husband and wife are more likely than not to be in full-time employment.

The changes in the prices of manufactured goods took a somewhat different form. These were fixed above the prices at which they had been obtainable by using points though much below the previous "commercial" price. Some, without doubt, would henceforth have to pay rather more for cloth and shoes than previously, but the proportion of those who were able to use their points to those who ended up the year with a number unused had been very small. The vast majority of the people bought manufactured goods at "commercial" prices. The following table lists the prices introduced in December, 1947, compared with those in the "commercial" shops a month previously :—

Article.	*New Price.*		*Old Price.*	
Calico ...	R. 10.10	per metre	R. 60	per metre
Rayon ...	R. 25	" "	R. 80	" "
Woollen mixture	R. 108	" "	R. 420	" "
Pure Wool Cloth	R. 450	" "	R. 1,200	" "
Crepe de chine ...	R. 137	" "	R. 250	" "
Cotton Dress ...	R. 77	each	R. 200	each
Men's Shoes ...	R. 260	per pair	R. 600	per pair
Women's Shoes	R. 260	" "	R. 500	" "
Goloshes ...	R. 45	" "	R. 200	" "
Felt winter boots	R. 195	" "	R. 550	" "
Lisle stockings	R. 7	" "	R. 35	" "
Men's socks ...	R. 17	" "	R. 45	" "
Matches ...	R. 0.20	box	R. 1	box
Soap, toilet ...	R. 4.00	piece	R. 35	piece
Cigarettes (25) ...	R. 6.40		R. 18	

These reductions, startling at first sight, are not sufficient to bring abundance within the reach of all, but they are such as to serve as a most valuable spur to hard work during the second half of the Five-Year Plan, for articles which were far beyond the grasp of the average worker are now, if not to be purchased out of regular wages, then available when bonuses and premiums come along.

From their inception the new measures created a new atmosphere as people realised that there was "no trick in it" and that the real value of wages had risen very substantially. As consumption increased, the rate of improvement in productivity rose. In autumn, 1948 the Government announced that in the first nine months of the year gross output of industry showed an increase of 27 per cent as against the corresponding period of 1947. The sale of bread in the third quarter of 1948, increased by more than half compared with the same months in 1947 ; sugar nearly doubled, confectionary increased by 41 per cent, cotton goods sales by 55 per cent, woollens by 41 per cent, leather footwear by 28 per cent. And what these figures do not show, but what was certainly an important factor, was that the sales were made for money gainfully earned.

* * * * *

The Soviet citizen is under no legal obligation to work and anyone who chooses to live on his savings, on inherited wealth or on the charity of others is entitled to do so. Unless however a non-working member of Soviet society was under working-age, or a pensioner, invalid or dependent (the category of servants, housewives, and mothers of young children) non-employment meant exclusion from the benefit of holding ration-cards until their abolition at the end of 1947. Food and manufactured goods would have

to be bought at high prices in the markets or commercial shops. The number of citizens who could afford to live for long in such a manner was a tiny minority. All the same their presence in Moscow during the first few years after the war was noticeable, and led to a tightening up of the controls by which residence-permits are granted.

What the " drone " does lose is, in short, the respect of Soviet society. The obligation to work that rests on the able-bodied Soviet citizen is something that I have never heard challenged. Perhaps because people are so fully alive to the shortcomings in their living standards, perhaps because experience has taught them that the community as a whole stands to benefit from advances in productivity, the slacker is treated with an intolerance that virtually amounts to condemning him as an outcast, and this is a very uncomfortable position to occupy in a society as congregational as Russian. The ugly words " sabotazhnik "—saboteur—comes quickly to Russian lips in such a connotation. " What he is sabotaging ? " I once asked a group of Russians who had been condemning the reluctance of an acquaintance to go on working after the end of the war. " Our chances of a better life," someone replied.

This respect for labour eased the task of the Soviet government in recruiting workers. An examination of the many measures taken in this field since the war lead to the conclusion that the Government has been somewhat reluctant to use direct compulsion in drafting labour to essential work. The 1940 law which both tied workers to their jobs in a number of important branches of industry and gave the government powers of direction, now repealed, was, as far as can be ascertained, only rarely applied. The returning soldier has been free to seek work where he will. In fact, most of them are believed to have resumed their previous occupations, a phenomenon which seems to have come as a welcome surprise to the government. Further,

one must not overlook the probability that for members of the Communist Party the summons to take up work where state interests were required, would frequently have been backed by reminders of party duties. There was, for example, a direction of Communists on a large scale to rural areas during 1947, as part of the drive for an improved harvest. But then no one joins the Communist Party without being fully aware that party discipline expects unquestioning obedience to such directions. The Komsomol has also been responsible for providing labour where it was most needed.

Generally speaking, the authorities appear to have relied on the voluntary principle strongly backed by propaganda, by the inducement of differential incentives, and by the authority of party or near-party organizations, for providing labour where it has been most needed. Not the least convincing of the proofs of the popularity of the regime that the present period has provided, is the way that the prickly problem of direction of labour is being solved with the minimum use of compulsion.

In one respect, however, the government uses its powers of direction to the full. The use of educational facilities provided by the state carries with it an obligation to work where required for a certain period. University graduates, qualified engineers emerging from the technical institutes, youths who have had two or three years training in labour reserve schools are called on by the appointments boards to go where their skill is needed. Usually a choice is offered, and the period of contract does not generally exceed two years. This form of guaranteeing a planned distribution of qualified labour is inherent in the economic planning system. As higher education costs little, the fees paid by those students who can afford them being equivalent to about one twelfth of what it costs the state to educate them, the principle of limited direction is one that

Soviet citizens do not quarrel with.

Young Russians, however, are prone to the usual human failings. The following translation of an article that appeared during the summer of 1947 shows how the authorities dealt with a girl-student who was unwilling to leave Moscow.

" These days the ranks of the intelligentsia are being complemented by new specialists who have just graduated. Many young Soviet graduates express their willingness to go wherever they are needed.

Before the Committee for the Distribution of Young Specialists stands a young, healthy-looking individual who has completed her education. ' Comrade, we should like to send you to the Novosibirsk oblast . . . .' The young person pales and blushes ' Ah, no. That's quite out of the question. I want to work in Moscow, only in Moscow. Nowhere else. I refuse the appointment.'

' What reason do you have for refusing ? Are you afraid of the Siberian climate. Aren't you strong ? '

' N-n-no. I have already said I want to live only in Moscow. I cannot live in the provinces. I have a—how would one put it . . . a city-nature. I must work in the city.'

' Do you know, Comrade, that M. I. Kalinin said that now every corner of our country is a part of Moscow ? '

' I repeat, I categorically refuse to go anywhere outside Moscow.'

The girl asks that her brilliant diploma be taken into account. The members of the committee quietly and patiently try to prove to her the inconsistency of her arguments. Did she know that the organization she was being sent to was the pride of the country ? Did she realise that specialists were needed there ?

' But I have a room in Moscow, don't you understand ? I have a comfortable room that I have grown used to.'

' You are 23 years old, Comrade, and you talk about a comfortable room.'

' Well, then, I am going to have a child. We must live in Moscow.'

' I suppose a child can grow up outside Moscow,' a member of the Committee observed. ' So you are an expectant mother ? '

' Strictly speaking, not yet. But in a month or two I may get married.'

' Comrade, you will go where we send you,' the Committee's chairman said, sternly.

' I won't ' the young lady with a city-nature shouted and left the hall demonstratively."

Unfortunately, *Pravda* commented sadly, her case was not the only one. Dealing with another case the newspaper wrote,

" One feels impelled to say to people of this sort :— ' Listen young Comrade, aren't you ashamed before the state which has fed you and taught you for several years, spending a lot of money on you to give you a higher education ? We had hard times during the war, but our institutes of higher learning didn't stop work for a single day. You studied while thousands at the front defended your right to an education. Many gave their lives for that.' "

Each year the Soviet authorities direct some six hundred thousand graduates from universities, and institutes, some half million young workers from labour reserve schools, into jobs where they are most needed.

To keep them there, to create a loyalty to factory or profession, several new measures have been introduced during the war. Ten years' work in the coal-mines, for example, qualifies the miner to a uniform and title. Many firms distribute their housing according to length of service. Factories have become increasingly the centre around which their workers' social life revolves. An innovation by which successful factories are allowed to reserve a percentage of annual profit for investment in amenities for their workers

will probably increase their resistance to that urge to uproot oneself and travel afar that seems to come over Russians periodically. Moreover, according to Soviet practice, the growth of a factory is reflected in improvements to the locality, the working-class being safeguarded against the practice, common in capitalist countries, whereby the profits earned in an industrial area are spent in parts of the country which, most likely, no worker will ever visit. Theatres, opera houses, sports stadiums, parks, schools and institutes have grown in the cities of the Donbass, Urals and Siberia apace with the factories so that the local worker sees a direct link between his labour and the improvement of the town he lives in, an important stimulus to local patriotism and an encouragement to labour to remain attached to the place of work.

In the early days of the Soviet Union a British trade union leader went down a coal-mine in the Donbass. It was an old mine and that was long before the Soviet government had re-equipped the Donbass with new machines. He found a miner working on the coal-face in highly primitive conditions and did not with-hold his comments. " Yes," the Russian agreed, " It's a poor mine, but it's our own." Twenty five years later I was on a visit to the same mining town and one evening I was taken to the theatre to watch a very creditable production of " The Barber of Seville." As we left the theatre, which by some miracle had escaped destruction by the Germans, and came out into the brightly lit main street, lined with trees, and newly reconstructed buildings, I remarked on the pleasantness of the scene. My companion was a mining engineer. " Yes " he agreed, " it is a fine town and it's our own."

* * * * *

If success is to attend the Soviet Union's efforts to fulfill its plans of raising industrial output at the end of 1950 by 48% over the 1940 level, it will be necessary to increase the individual productivity of the Soviet factory worker and employee by over one third. Such an increase is called for by the current Five-Year Plan and it is towards this end that a great many of the measures taken since the war are directed, including the extension of the premium system, the development of the competitive spirit between different factories in the same field of industry, the broadening of opportunities for technical education and improvements in the living conditions of the workers. The government has not hesitated to tell the nation that easier times will come only if it works harder, longer and more skilfully. The extension of the working day from seven to eight hours in a six-day week, decreed in the summer of 1940, was confirmed in 1947 when it was written into the Constitution. But most of the measures taken to increase productivity are of a less direct kind, falling into the categories of incentives and education.

Is a 36% increase in individual productivity feasible ? Can the Soviet Union in this way overcome the tragic difficulty created by its war losses of seven million ? The lessons of the past give a positive answer to this crucial question. During the course of the Second Five-Year plan industrial production rose by 120.6%, the number of workers in industry by 26.25%. Individual productivity rose in this period by 82%. On the face of it, a rise in individual productivity by 36% by 1950 over the 1940 level should not be beyond reach during a process of increasing total industrial output by 48%. The new factories that are being built to replace those destroyed by the Germans are better planned and better equipped than the old. Small workshops, a legacy of the past, where much of the light industry of the nation was conducted, are not being restored

where there are opportunities of introducing mass production methods. But above all it is the human factor that will count.

A whole range of special human problems have arisen in the past from the introduction into industry of new labour involving the transfer of millions from rural areas to the cities, from Europe to Asia. In the 13 years between 1926 and 1939 the population of urban U.S.S.R. rose from 26 million to 56 million. There was an increase of over 15 million in the number of those employed in industry during the first ten years of Soviet Five-Year planning, including a rise from 3,100,000 to 8,360,000 in workers in large factories, from 723,000 to 2,020,000 in the number of building-workers. Between 1926 and 1939 the population of the Urals, Siberia and the Far East rose by nearly six million or 33%, a half of these being settlers from other parts of the Union, for whose labour demand was slackening in Moscow and Leningrad, Kiev, Kharkov, Rostov-on-the-Don, Gorky, Sverdlovsk and other old industrial centres affected by the government's measures to restrict further factory development—a step which, it is worth noting, originated in the Lenin principle of placing industry near new sources of raw material, and not in considerations of defence strategy. These transfers of population called for a big development in building. During the first two Five-Year plans the state invested 40,000 million roubles in housing and buildings connected with the social services, providing about 50 million square metres of new housing space.

The war brought great changes in the make-up of the Soviet working-class. Millions of workers were drawn into the army, their places being taken by women and youths.* The cities' demands on the labour of the rural

* The proportion of women in employment rose from 38% in 1940 to 53% in 1942. Women outnumbered men in industry and they were as 3 to 1 in agriculture. In 1942 83% of persons engaged in the medical services were women; in education 73%, and in state administration 55%. While in peace-time the proportion of industrial workers under 18 years of age is 6% in 1942 it had risen to 15% of the total.

areas became more insistent. The inspectors of the Commission for Labour Reserves, later made a Ministry, drew an increased number of youths away from school, where by a new measure parents who wished to have their children remain for secondary education had to pay. Admittedly, the fees were small, and clever children received scholarships; all the same the introduction of fees was enough to make many children and parents think twice before turning down an offer from factory school or a government training centre, with promises of free clothing issues, free board while studying and a qualification at the age of 17. Of the 1,360 major factories evacuated, 455 went to the Urals, 310 to W. Siberia, 250 to Central Asia and Kazakhstan. Most of the rest were re-established in the Middle Volga region.

Not all of these returned when the Germans were expelled, and as the factories of the Ukraine and Byelorussia and other liberated regions were rebuilt and important new industrial centres were established in the Western regions, hundreds of thousands of new workers from collective farms and small towns filled their places. Even in areas which had not been as heavily affected by evacuation the disproportion of new to experienced labour was a serious factor in the post-war period. In a Moscow stocking factory, for example, the position in 1947 was such that only one quarter of the workers had more than five years' experience of factory-work, and fully one quarter had been employed for less than one year. In an important instrument factory at the town of Marx in the former Volga German republic, three out of five of the workers had less than two years' experience. This is a normal phenomenon after a long war but it is aggravated by the intake of $1\frac{1}{4}$ million new workers annually during the course of the present Five-Year Plan, and it sets special problems to management in practically every factory in the

Soviet Union.

Several measures have been taken during the period we are reviewing aimed at preventing the drift of labour from one enterprise to another. In August 1946, the Council of Ministers published a decree raising wages of most grades of workers in the Urals, Siberia and Far East, and placing management under the obligation to build individual homes for workers, or to provide them with credit facilities for building them themselves. Greater attention began to be paid during this period to the practice of drawing up individual contracts under which workers pledge themselves to work for a certain period, usually three years, in return for guarantees from management concerning housing and other amenities. Finally, a vigorously conducted campaign was launched by the Trade Unions to improve the general conditions of the factory workers. Acting with the conviction that the many workers who entered factories during the war could only be persuaded to stay there if they were provided with better conditions, the Trade Unions through their influential and well-run press, began mercilessly to expose government departments, ministries and individual factory managers who in their view were neglecting the worker's interests. No scandal or abuse was too big or too small to escape the attention of *Trud's* worker-correspondents, zealous trade-unionists who writing from every factory supply the editorial office in Moscow with what amounts to a day-to-day account of trade union activities. Praise for Magnitogorsk where a new township of privately-owned houses, with gardens large enough for the worker-owners to found small-holding economy, appeared in 1946-1947; blame for the manager of a canteen in a saw-mill where for fifty-five people there were only four spoons and 13 soup plates; approbation of the government's new decree, issued in the summer of 1947, protecting private property by increasing the terms of punishment for theft, a follow-up to

an earlier decree restoring to people the right to will their property to whomever they pleased; and always, the closest attention to the care of the youngsters flowing into industry at the rate of three quarters of a million a year from technical training schools—the Trade Union papers have showed themselves to be vigilant watch-dogs for the interests of the workers.

Sometimes the Trade Unions aimed at offices whose holders may have considered themselves beyond reproach. One morning in 1947, the principle Trade Union newspaper considered the way two Republican ministers were attending to their work. One of them, it wrote, worked until six o'clock in the morning, not leaving his office until every letter issuing from the ministry had been brought to him for signature, with the result that though he kept his eye on every detail of administration, audiences were denied important people and the work of the ministry came to a standstill with the minister's absence. Another minister was criticized for allowing himself to be plagued by his staff, who " to make the document stronger " laid before him letters dealing with hundreds of insignificant details, ranging from the wording of an advertisement for the canteen to orders for footballs for the ministerial sports section. Some people, *Trud* commented, think that both these ministers showed the art of leadership in the highest degree, but in fact both are handling their work badly, one a busybody, the other a slave to his staff. Occasionally the voice of complaint comes from a different quarter, as illustrated by a letter to the Editor of *Pravda* published from the Director-in-chief of a large electrical concern. *Pravda* published it with relish under the bold headline " When can one work, Comrades, ? " though it contained some pointed criticism of Party methods. It ran :—

> A strange practice has taken root in the town of Zaporozhye, i.e., on any question affecting them the

local workers will deal only with the director of the economic organisation. As there are many local organisations and they all wish to deal with the director or with the head of the undertaking the latter have very little time in which to discharge the duties laid on them by the Party and the Government.

I am the head of the Zaporozhian directorate of the trust "Uzh-Elektro-Montazh" and 1,400 electricians come under my supervision. The assembly work covers a large area and the interests of the work demand that the chief should be there personally especially as in the past the work proceeded very slowly and it is now necessary to improve the position. It is, however, very difficult to be on the spot as almost 70% of working time must be spent in explanations, receiving inspectors, writing out certificates and at meetings.

Here for example is how my working day on the 14th of February was occupied. It began with a visit from the instructor of the *raion* committee of the Party who came about the question of a worker who had lost his food card but afterwards asked questions of items and quantities of special clothing issued to workers in October, November, December and January, what were the average wages of the workers, etc. etc.

As soon as I had finished with him a commission arrived from the *raion* military committee to check documents of those liable to military service although this work could have been done quite well without me. The commission had hardly left when the instructor of the *oblast* Party Committee appeared who was interested in the question of man-power turnover. Hardly had he gone than a courier came and said that I was required by the deputy secretary of the Party Committee "Zaporozhstroi."

From 8 in the morning till midnight I was in fact

deprived of the possibility of attending to production questions. I do not know how the second half of the day would have been spent if I had not left the office.

Almost every day and several times during the day the instructor of the Party committee rings me up and asks me to find "immediately" the secretary of the Party Committee, Comrade Titov. When I attempt to explain that Comrade Titov works in the section where there is no telephone and I have not the time to go personally I am reprimanded as if I have no respect for a party organ.

Every little question requires my personal appearance before the prosecutor of the *raion*. For instance, one of the supply agents was reduced to porter for unsatisfactory work and when he complained I was obliged to appear personally at the prosecutor's office having been warned that if I did not, the sternest measures would be taken against me. The chief of the passport department of the *raion* militia sector calls the director of the construction organisation to him and if the latter explained that he cannot go on account of work the chief of the passport department gives him half an hour's lecture on the importance of the passport and the prompt registration of workers.

I have only given here a small part of the facts. In connection with the Government decree for the speeding up of restoration work the number of inspecting commissions has increased. Instead, therefore, of being able to devote all one's energy in the coming warm weather to the removal of the serious deficiencies in our organisation one must tear oneself away from business.

If one is to satisfy all demands and to appear at every call then the question is raised; when can one work, comrades?

Chief of the directorate of the trust,
"Uzhelektromontazh" S. Korotkov.

At the foot of this letter appeared the following editorial note :—

> In publishing Comrade Korotkov's letter the editors of *Pravda* draw the attention of the Zaporozhye *oblast* Committee of the Party to the abnormal relations between some local organs and the directors of economic organisations. As *Pravda's* special correspondent reports from Zaporozhye, the facts quoted by Comrade Korotkov are unfortunately not isolated ones.

Bureaucratism is being fought at all levels in the post-war period and if it is true that the individual in the Soviet Union is often at the mercy of decisions taken in high places, it may also be said that the individual, if he is prepared to take action, may correct many abuses of power by appealing over the heads of his superiors to these places. The Soviet worker has many opportunities of voicing his discontent with the way government policy is being put into practice and sometimes expresses it with a frankness that contrasts strangely with the obedience to decisions in principle that is expected of him. The writer has had the privilege of reading many of the hundreds of letters received daily by local newspapers containing complaints of a wide variety against municipal authorities, and of observing what action is taken as a result. There is a healthy tradition in Soviet newspaper practice that every such letter shall receive a reply and that where investigation shows that action needs to be taken, it is taken. All newspapers maintain a staff of reporters who have no other function except to carry out such investigations, a job which requires no less boldness, ingenuity and sometimes sheer cheek, than is demanded from the city reporter of a Western European or American newspaper. One recognises the tone of the type of letter that an outraged local official writes to the editor complaining that one of his staff has been " poking his nose into matters

that don't concern him at all."

Soviet theoreticians claim that all antagonistic contradictions have been removed from their society by the disappearance of the main contradiction between the public nature of production and the private form of gain. They admit, however, that a number of sharp non-antagonistic contradictions exist, arise and have to be overcome as the public and personal requirements, material and spiritual demands of the masses increase. " The uninterrupted growth of consumption is always ahead of the increase of production, urging it forward." In this sense, it is admitted, public requirements are in contradiction with an insufficiency of means in meeting them, and will remain so until the age of plenty is reached. In such conditions, therefore, the Soviet citizen may be expected to struggle for improvement of his conditions against all that is outmoded and conservative in his environment, against bureaucratism or the abuse of power.

The accessibility of high officials to suggestions and complaints from lower levels is considered a prerequisite to effective administration. Probably no subject has been dealt with more often in the post-war period in the pages of the satirical paper " Krokodil " than the bureaucrat who isolates himself from the public and is not available to receive people who have stepped over the intermediate ranks to bring cases of inefficiency or injustice to his attention. " Narod plokhoi nye bivayet, bivayoot plokhiye lyoodi " there are bad people, but the people is never bad—and it is the alliance between the chiefs and the people against the unconscientious, heartless, over-worked, over-tired, inexperienced, harassed, safe-playing, ignorant, stool-bound element in the middle ranks of administration, that is required if progress is to be made. Under its pressure there is a constant reshuffling, correcting, prodding and purging of these ranks. Officials rise and fall as swiftly, but not as

fortuitously, as players in a game of snakes and ladders. But new opportunities generally offer themselves to the demoted. The hoary old chestnut of the foreigner who was surprised to find the former factory-manager sweeping floors but who, on offering his sympathy, was told " Nichevo ! I'll soon be a director again " contains a kernel of truth.

Chapter Three

THE BATTLE FOR THE HARVEST

TWENTY years ago there were five people living in the country in the Soviet Union for one town-dweller. Today the urban population is more than a third of the total, amounting to about seventy million. On the Government falls the responsibility of providing food, in the first place bread, for these towns-people whose annual consumption of the staple product in the Russian diet is reckoned to total about 14 million tons.

On the eve of the late war the government was reckoning to obtain about 35% of the gross harvest through its collecting agencies and the various channels by which marketable grain reached the towns. In 1940 almost 37 million tons came on to the market. During the three previous years the state had secured through the system of obligatory deliveries about 27 million tons of grain a year, while a good deal more had been purchased either by the state or in the town markets by the consumers. Supplies had therefore been ample to meet the requirements of the towns and to enable the government to lay aside reserves, objectives which in contrast with pre-revolutionary practice were placed before the needs for export.

With good stocks in hand and the base of marketable grain shifted from the Ukraine to the north and the east, the Soviet Union passed through the war years without any serious breakdown in bread supplies, except of course in areas

where enemy action disrupted the distribution system. Within a year of the end of the war the position was such as to enable the head of the government to announce that bread along with other consumption articles would be off the ration before the end of 1946.

Two events led to the postponement of this measure until after the 1947 harvest; a drought which in parts of the Soviet Union approached in severity the catastrophic drought of 1891, and the deterioration of the European food situation, to alleviate which Russia in her own hour of grave shortage, raised her exports to a figure nearing the highest pre-war total. To have withheld exports at that time would, no doubt, have reduced Russia's voice in foreign affairs to the same level of ineffectiveness of which the British Foreign Secretary complained that his had been reduced to through lack of exportable coal. None the less, these food exports sharpened the sufferings of the Soviet people in the winter of 1946 and the first half of 1947.

It was against this background of intense hardship and in the shadow of possible famine that two important conferences took place in Moscow at the beginning of 1947. While the Foreign Ministers' Council was being held in the House of the Aviation Industry, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party was discussing, in plenary session, the state of the nation's agriculture in their headquarters in the Old Square. The international conference was widely reported in the world's press with the minimum of delay, but it was a matter of weeks before an account of the deliberations of the Central Committee became public knowledge. Some British papers gave a few inches to a summary of its decisions but most of the world outside Russia ignored them.

Yet the picture of the food situation resulting from the 1946 drought that was provided to the Central Committee by its experts, and the menace it contained for the fate of

the reconstruction plans not only of the U.S.S.R., but of her European neighbours—and on the fulfilment of these plans, one must remember, the Soviet government was convinced that its own future and the independence of Russia were staked—were undoubtedly major factors in determining the Soviet attitude in the Foreign Ministers' Council. In particular, it may be assumed, it had an effect on the Soviet point of view concerning Germany's obligations to pay reparations in goods out of current production.

Within a month or two of the unsatisfactory end of this international conference I was on my way to examine the methods with which the Central Committee's decisions were being executed. My interest was all the keener because it seemed probable that on the degree of success that attended the nation's efforts to fulfill its plans, depended not only the welfare of the Russian people during the coming winter but also the role the Soviet Union was to play in international affairs, and, in particular, in helping her neighbours to carry out their plans for socialist reconstruction.

We drove along the right bank of the Dnieper, through Podol, the commercial part of Kiev over which urbane, elegant, Saint Andrew's Church stands guardian, and quickly reached the countryside that presses to the outskirts of the city.

Unlike the landscape of Russia where the earth is being constantly remodelled by the harsh action of frost and flood, the trees stripped and split by intense cold, and country dwellings reduced to a weathered shabbiness, the Ukraine presents a gentle face to the traveller. Here spring advances at a more even pace, the snow melts more gradually. The melodramatic end of winter in the Russian village reveals abrasions and scars, tilting walls and ragged bedraggled vegetation. There is something disconsolate about the look of Russia in April, a dilapidation that rouses people

to a frenzy of scrubbing and painting, digging and repairing.

But in the south the ravages of climate are less severe, the wear-and-tear of winter is soon repaired as the frayed end of the season makes way for spring.

On this May morning even the northern outskirts of Kiev through which the liberating armies of Vatutin had swept less than four years before, wore a pleasant look. When I had passed this way eighteen months before, every village bore ugly traces of the war. The temporary adobe-type cottages looked incongruous beside the older more solidly built ones. Now most of these huts where the villagers had found shelter during the first winter of their liberation had been replaced. Scarcely a view that did not contain the gleam of new timber, the skeleton of frame cottages in process of construction. According to custom Ukrainian cottages are placed at an angle to the highway, providing each with a clear view of the road and avoiding the monotony of ribbon building. There is a valuable tradition of village planning here in the south that has eased the work of the Kiev Institute of Rural Planning, formed to guide the farmers during their work of rebuilding a million new homes during the reconstruction period.

Most of the villages we drove through contained war-graves, common or "brotherly" tombs beside the road, on which were raised simple wooded obelisks surmounted by a five-pointed star. Throughout the liberated lands one finds these memorials to the dead, well tended, neat compared to the graveyards which remain as overgrown as they were in Turgeniev's time. There was considerable variety in the designs and the material in rebuilt cottages. Some were loose-thatched, with roofs as shaggy as Ukrainian moustaches and Ukrainian *papakhas*. Other cottagers had used shingles, prepared slate or sheets of salvaged metal, usually hammered out from damaged war-transport. The newer buildings are made of wood frames to which planks

are spiked with spaces left between them. Into these spaces and over the planks, inside and out, a plaster is daubed, a mixture of mud and straw which when whitewashed is almost as durable as mortar.

The asphalted road with the dusty dirt track beside it climbed the hills. Occasionally we met trucks dragging lumber from the Polesian forests. We overtook a tractor or two, the heavily-built products of Chelyabinsk, Kharkov or Stalingrad, that look so clumsy beside the neat American-built tractors supplied by U.N.R.R.A. They served as a reminder that however advanced Soviet farming may be in its organisation and in the application of science to agricultural processes, Soviet farm-machinery has not yet been perfected to the same extent as in U.S.A. or Great Britain. Twenty years ago, however, only primitive implements were used in this country. The rarity of traffic on the highway also reveals how much development remains to be accomplished in the Soviet country-side. The links between town and village are tenuous and until the present drive to multiply trade channels produces results, the exchange of goods between the urban and rural population will continue to be severely restricted. Though population density in the Ukraine is high, country towns to serve the needs of surrounding farmers are remarkably few. To a large extent the collective-farm and village community is independent of the town. Glass, nails and hinges are the only building materials a farm does not ordinarily supply its members from its own workshops. The simple rough-hewn furniture is generally the product of the local carpenter's shop. Manufactured goods are generally bought at the spring and autumn bazaars in the larger towns. That boon to farmers, the mail-order firm, has only reached the Soviet Union for the first time in September 1949.

The villages are thrown on their own resources for cultural recreation. Kiev, for instance, is well provided

with theatres, including a ballet and opera company. Yet it is still more practicable to send a group of actors to play in village halls within twenty miles of the city than to bring the audience to Kiev by bus or train. Collective farms provide recreational facilities to their members which would be superfluous were roads and transport of a standard to enable country-folk to travel more conveniently. The future will certainly see changes in the direction of knitting villages and towns more closely together, and as food-processing plants and other forms of local industry are developed on the farms, new townships are likely to appear in the Soviet map. Almost every month the Official Gazette provides evidence of this trend by its lists of hamlets promoted to village status, villages that have become towns. The reviving co-operative movement by which farmers are relieved of time-wasting shopping and marketing by creating their own shops and selling-organs is also cast for an important role. And already through radio and the electricity grid the city is striding into the village.

Once we stopped the car where the road topped a hill. Below us lay the valley of the Dnieper with interlacing streams of various tones of blue, flecked with the light yellow of the drying strands. The rye-fields scowled and paled as the wind ruffled their surface. Across the river the steppe stretched to the very horizon but to the west and to the north the ragged edge of the woods was to be seen. Up the winding ravines the shrubs of the valley advanced to invade the fields, thinned and gave up, leaving the land clean and hedgeless. A mile or two away at the end of a wavy track there lay a new village, with white-washed cottages perched high on posts, barns with shaggy thatched roofs and young fruit trees bound with straw against the hares. The swallows flew high; from somewhere unseen there came the ringing sound of an axe; a boy in a faded, shapeless quilted coat and a cloth helmet of the type

Budyonny designed for his cavalry, gave up trimming a switch to gaze at us curiously. Among the red and white Ukrainian cattle he watched were a few light brown Holsteins. Not war, which had passed across this land so recently, but man's resilience to its flail was evoked by this scene.

Three miles of dirt-track lined with ash, willow and poplar led from the highway to the "Red Partisan" collective-farm at Kazarovichi village. In the past the villages of the Ukraine, those west of the Dnieper in particular, shunned the main roads, the way the armies, the police and the tax collectors came. Judging by the new villages the Ukrainians today have more confidence in the authorities. The village of Kazarovichi, however, had been rebuilt where it stood, before the Germans burned it down on October 30th, 1943.

It had never been a rich farm, Kolkhoz-chairman Georgi Nikolayevitch Ivancha told us as we sat in his tiny office under the framed charter of the collective farm. Before the Revolution a Bessarabian landlord farmed it through a bailiff. His house, brick-built and overhung with elm trees, was still to be seen from the farm office. Part of it was now used as a crêche, part by the farm's agronomist who had inherited a small meteorological station. The Bessarabian sold the farm to a Russian called Popoff. After the Revolution the land was divided unevenly between some six hundred households, the average small-holding being about five acres of tilled land. In 1930 it was collectivized, that is to say, the land, as public, state property was given to an agricultural artel or co-operative consisting of peasants of Kazarovichi for their use in perpetuity. The by-laws of the "Red Partisan" farm reflect the spirit of those times. "The toiling peasants of Kazarovichi," the opening paragraph runs "are being united voluntarily into an agricultural artel to build a collective farm, an economic

organization guaranteeing the complete victory over the kulaks . . . . over exploitation and the enemies of the working people . . . . to guarantee the complete victory over want and darkness . . . . to work honestly . . . ." Another, no less revealing, places the board of directors under the legal obligation to raise production and make full use of the land and equipment, to raise the cultural level of members of the farm, to subscribe to papers, provide radio, a club, a barber shop, to plant fruit trees in the village streets and to release women from the burdens of domestic work by organising nurseries. As in so many aspects of Soviet life, rights and duties, benefits and obligations are balanced against each other in the social contract.

The " Red Partisan " farm had gone about half the way to the realisation of these ideals before the Germans snuffed it out. It had no electricity or piped water, but it had a ten-grade school. Its houses were cheaply constructed, but they were durable. They lived economically, even frugally at Kazarovichi, but each year about one-fifth of the farm's income was being invested in new buildings and machines, and this reinvestment in the business was preparing a higher standard of living for the next generation. The farm community was buoyed up in difficult times by the knowledge that were the land and other property of the collective to be divided between the separate households, the peasant holdings that would have resulted would be too small for any but the simplest implements and there would not be enough animals or machines to go round. The village would also be without its cultural amenities.

1937 was a good year, the first in which the farmers of Kazarovichi got results solid enough to convince the doubters among them. At that time the farm consisted of 630 households and 2,100 persons of whom 1,300 worked in one way or another during the year. That included most of the women and many of the children, but their work was mainly

restricted to the peak periods. In all 200,000 labour days were expended on farm work, including the cost of administration and new construction. The labour-day is the norm by which the equity of the worker is established. Each category of work is rated in advance according to a scale supplied by the Ministry of Agriculture. It is left to an annual meeting of the farm's members, however, to establish the piece-rates. A credit of 1½ labour-days was given at Kazarovichi for weeding ¼ hectare of beet-field. Most farmers could cover almost twice this area in six hours. The labour-day is in fact a form of currency the exact value of which only becomes known after the harvest is in and the farm's obligations have been met. Then, the farmers meet and decide what to do with the balance, how much to sell, how much to distribute in kind, how much to put in reserve.

The " Red Partisan " farm's land consist of about 6,800 acres of tilled land, hay-land and pasture in roughly equal quantities, 200 acres of orchard and vegetable garden and about 350 acres of woodland. In addition there are 700 acres of individual tracts, allotted to farmers for as long as they are able to use them. In all some 8,000 acres. The tilled land on this farm is divided into eight fields for the purposes of crop rotation between winter and spring grain, clover, root-crops, technical crops and fallow.

In 1937, 500 hectares were ploughed by tractors, 425 hectares with horses and oxen. There were no combines available and grain was cut by reapers and bound by hand. This was the farm's best pre-war year.

The crop was given as follows :—

Crop	*Area in hectares*	*Yield in Centners per hectare*	*Production in Centners*
Rye ...	150	15	2,250

Wheat ...	60	18	1,080
Oats ...	120	14	1,680
Barley ...	80	12	960
Millet ...	25	19	475
Buckwheat	60	8	480
Potatoes ...	180	200	36,000
Red Clover	150	—	—
Vegetables ...	120	—	—
Fallow ...	30	—	—

At the end of the season the farmers received 3 kilos of grain, 10 kilos of potatoes, and an allowance of other vegetables for each labour-day worked. There was also a cash intake of 850,000 roubles of which 350,000 went in taxes and cash expenditure and 500,000 were distributed on the basis of 2.5 roubles per labour day.

This was a good reward for labour expended. The farmers were able to take their share of the farm's produce and sell it on the open market or through the collective to the government or the co-operatives, which are often able to conduct direct exchanges of manufactured goods for foodstuffs. After a 20% allocation for investment in new building had been made the distribution of produce for that year was in the following proportions :—

Government obligatory deliveries ...	8%
Payment for M.T.S. services ...	10%
Seed	20%
Food	20%
Payment to members according to labour-days worked	42%

This level of success was no ultimate achievement. It was a poor collective-farm where the standard of living fell below that of many others. It was only just emerging

from the phase in which collectivisation could be looked upon as a means by which poor farmers can rehabilitate themselves.

In summer 1941 the farm was over-run by the Germans and ceased to operate as a collective. Only the old men, the women and the children remained. Georgi Ivancha, the chairman, led a group into the forest to fight as partisans. Others joined the army. The Germans made heavy claims on the crops grown by individual farmers. Production was low, fertilizers in short supply and the crop rotation interrupted. The farmers worked without the expert guidance they had come to rely on from the agronomist.

Across the water-meadows of the " Red Partisan " Farm the Germans built an anti-tank dyke when General Vatutin's men reached the left bank of the Dnieper in the autumn of 1943, and when the Russians swarmed across the river on the eve of winter the Germans destroyed the " Red Partisan " farm. Kazarovichi lay on the line of fire.

85% of all the houses in this village were completely destroyed, 1,000 buildings in all. All the work-stock was lost. Before the war there were 530 cattle of which 85 were milk-cows and 90 oxen, 280 horses, 450 hogs and 480 sheep. When it was liberated there were no animals whatever and all the barns and stables were burned.

In 1944, instead of the 1,300 who worked the farm before the war, there were 600. Of these 500 were women. When the count was taken, when the repatriation of prisoners-of-war and slave-labourers was complete, it was found that 200 men of this village had perished in the war. Scarcely a house I entered was without a portrait of a fallen man. The farm supports 50 maimed men, for whom light work has been found.

Before the war the farm's central buildings numbered 11. Eight of these were destroyed. The elementary and secondary schools were destroyed.

Life at Kazarovichi was frugal enough before the war. In 1944, after the liberation, the pulse of this charred village scarcely beat at all. In only one street were there any habitable cottages and into these and into dug-outs carved in the cliff and in lean-to dwellings where a piece of rusting tin roofing was propped against the surviving bricks of a cottage stove, and in burnt-out German trucks, the families of Kazarovichi crowded.

For two years they were rebuilding their homes at Kazarovichi, and at the same time they were rebuilding collective-farm buildings, restoring their herds, planting crops, fighting weeds, doing all the farm work and tending their individual tracts. Logs were cut and man-hauled in waggons and sleds to the saw mill and the planks were hauled back to the carpenter shop. Straw was hauled for thatch. Bricks were salvaged from the old houses. The collective farm furnished all the necessary skilled labour, carpenters, plasterers, masons, thatchers.

" And as for what we did after that," the farmer said, " You must look for yourself." He had related the history of the farm plainly, without pathos, letting the facts speak for themselves. " In some places " he said, " it is the custom to show only the best. That is not our way. We want people to see the average." I told him that if what he had told us was true the farm had nothing to be ashamed of and that on the contrary they had every reason to feel proud of their achievements. And to this he replied with true Ukrainian caution that if I was speaking sincerely it was very pleasant to hear it.

The village was celebrating Ascension Day, its older inhabitants by going to church, keeping tryst in the cemetery and visiting their friends; the younger generation had worked half the day, and in the afternoon gathered on the village green to play volley-ball. Only the tractor-team, ploughing fallow land near the river, went on working.

Operating on two ten-hour shifts a high rugged Russian-built tractor, dragging a five-blade plough and a spring-toothed cultivator, was covering fifteen acres a day. When I left long after night-fall its headlamps were sweeping the river like a searchlight, as it wheeled for a new run. One of the few complaints I heard in the Ukraine about the tractors supplied by U.N.R.R.A. was that they were not fitted with lamps for night work. U.N.R.R.A. agricultural experts expressed the opinion that the productivity of tractors in the Ukraine exceeds anything they knew elsewhere. There is involved not only field work performed 20 hours a day over a long period, but the thorough overhauling annually of machines and the prompt emergency repairs during operations. The stress on training and education may be due to an effort to correct defects that existed early in mechanisation—those defects upon which so many foreign observers seized to create a legend of Russia's mechanical incapacity that has been long-dying—or it may be yet another example of Bolshevik perfectionism. Whatever the cause, the practice of only entrusting tractor-drivers with tractors in field-work after they have had a six-month's training course followed by two-year's apprenticeship in repairing tractors seems to have produced employees who are thoroughly competent to perform their duties.

As we toured the farm, we were joined by ex-colonel Harchuk, chairman of the district executive committee, the only state organisation the farm had any regular contact with. This was a very different type of man from our host. Suave and handsome in successful middle-age, he wore the dignity of his office—there were, he told me 45 collective farms in the district—with an assurance which, no doubt, owed something to the presence on his chest of the Order of Alexander Nevsky. He surprised me, however, by explaining rather diffidently that as he had not long been out of the army he was still wearing the remnants of his

uniform. One is always being surprised by these apologies for anything that contains a reminder of the war, until one remembers how eagerly and naturally Red Army officers used to talk of their peace-time professions during the war. Mr. Harchuk had taken part in the liberation of Warsaw and was in Lithuania on VE day. Coupled with the quiet restrained manner of the Soviet official, I could detect traces of that hauteur so often found in educated Russians whom the course of war took beyond the Soviet frontiers on a mission of liberation and conquest. Something less than conceit, but more than a sense of satisfaction brought by finishing a job well, it appears to stem from the recent discovery of their strength and dignity, common to men of action in well-nigh all the lands of Eastern Europe that fought the Germans with success. Victory put an end to the German theory of Slav inferiority. Today the Slavs feel themselves as good, sometimes perhaps better, than any other people.

I doubt, though, whether Farmer Ivancha ever felt any different about his status in life since he first watched hogs on his father's patch, though he had risen to a position of authority. Georgi Nikolayevitch Ivancha was under middle height, but broad-shouldered and muscular, a stubborn oak beside a willow as he walked his land with Harchuk. He was quite bald and his nose was very large but it was a pleasure to look at him, so frank and open an expression did he wear. He had received little education before the Revolution but was endowed with a natural intelligence, knew the land well, the sandy loam of the sloping hills that was so sensitive to drought, the meadow-lands in the valley with their dangerous water-holes, knew the right moment for each operation, the mowing of the hay, the cutting down of the spring corn and the winter rye. When I talked with the villagers I learned that they trusted him. When he went each February to the district centre to bargain with

other farmers and the government representative about the annual plan, they felt, they told me, that their interests would be safeguarded by Farmer Ivancha. He did not readily bear interference in the farm's affairs from outside, and the last thing he thought of doing when there was any trouble on the farm was to have recourse to the authorities. Yet the fact that his own position as chairman was open to revision by popular ballot every two years and that under the farm's bye-laws he was obliged to meet his colleagues in the farm management board every fortnight and to submit an account of his stewardship to general meetings of all the farm's members, did not seem irksome to him. His cottage was no larger or better furnished than others, he was entitled to no extra land for his private use, and his income was dependant like that of all the farm's workers on the state of the harvest. At the time of the year when I watched him at work it was his custom to visit the fields at 7 a.m., to examine the state of the vegetables in the forcing beds or in the fields where they had been planted. Then he would spend an hour or two supervising the work of the construction brigade, watching a bearing being hammered out for a cart-axle, discussing with the foreman the progress on the new barns. Later he met the farm's keepers, mostly wounded ex-servicemen, whose duties consisted in seeing that the herds did not stray onto fields ready for mowing, that the crops were safe and the roads in good order. He did not believe in being constantly present when the labourers were at work, for he had confidence in his brigade and link-leaders. " I expect to be trusted to do my job " he said, " and I trust others to do theirs, though we keep an eye on each other." Ivancha had his hand on the pulse of the farm. Every evening the brigadiers closed his twelve-hour working day with short verbal reports and received from him their instructions for the following day. Georgi Nikolayevitch loved his farm. He had seen it develop from a landlord's

farm to a group of small-holdings, then to a collective. To the forest where he fought as a partisan, news reached him of the disruption of its economy during the occupation. From an island in the Dnieper he watched it burn. He returned to find his handiwork ruined, and once again he set out on the arduous path of reconstructing it. Life had never taken him far from this stretch of undulating land beside the Dnieper but it had been so packed with dynamic events that it had shaped him in the mould of a pioneer. For centuries men like Ivancha had wandered to far lands, within and beyond the Russian frontiers, in search of an outlet for their energy. They had colonized Siberia reaching the shores of the Pacific, they had settled the Kuban pressing to the edge of the Caucasus, they had brimmed over the Carpathians onto the Pannonian plains, they had been tempted to the Americas.

They are still leaving the villages of the Ukraine, flowing to the factories and towns which absorb one and a half million peasants each year, and some are settling the Far North, East Prussia and the Pacific islands. But those that stay in their villages now find a local demand for their initiative.

Under the leadership of Ivancha and the managerial committee, the " Red Partisan " farm was gradually rebuilt. In the spring of 1944 about 500 hectares were sown, including 300 of grain. The yield was low, only about 9 centners per hectare, due to late sowing, lack of fertilizers, and labour shortage. But in the following year the farm reached half-way house towards its best pre-war years' production.

In 1946 this region was stricken by drought. The crop fell to about one third of 1937. The following table tells its own tale :—

Crop		*hectares*	*centners per hectare*	*Total centners*
Rye	...	150	10	1,500

Wheat	...	50	4	200
Oats	...	130	8	1,040
Barley	...	120	3	360
Millet	...	30	6	180
Buckwheat	...	50	4	200
Potatoes	...	160	80	12,800
Red Clover	...	70	—	—
Cabbage	...	15	30	450
Beets	...	15	40	600
Cucumber	...	10	12	120
Tomatoes	...	20	15	300
Fallow	...	50	—	—

Though this part of the Ukraine was less hard hit than others, the drought gravely sharpened the sufferings of the people of Kazarovichi. " Let God send us more rain " were the first words we heard as we approached the farm. It was the reply to the greeting we had shouted to a group of women in the cemetery. We were told that the pay-out per labour-day at the end of 1946 had been 700 grammes of grain instead of the three kilogrammes expected.

The 1947 season, however, was sufficiently advanced for hopes to have risen. The land looked clean and the autumn sown crops were in good condition. Further there was evidence on all sides to tell of the energetic measures that were being taken to advance the reconstruction of kolkhoz life. Road repair and bridge building were in full swing, an electric cable—an U.N.R.R.A. product—was being laid across the farm's land, two hundred hectares of peaty ground near the river were being reclaimed. Above all, there was the rebuilding of the farm and its cottages. Ivancha's own cottage was one of a row of new ones. It consisted of a single-storey bungalow with a composition roofing material. The house was built on a timber frame to which rough-hewn planks were spiked. Withies were

then woven through the planks, plaster daubed on and everything whitewashed, inside and out. The shutters were painted pea-green. There were frame-built outbuildings including a privy, and between the front garden and the road there was a wicket-fence. The back garden was unfenced and ran right into the collective fields. Ivancha had no room for flowers in his garden, and grew wheat, potatoes and some other vegetables. Inside, the cottage had two rooms and a small unheated porch used for stores. The floors were boarded. There were fresh lilies-of-the-valley in a jar on the table, hand-embroidered lengths of linen draped around the windows and the wall-mirror from which a large silver watch dangled. The ikons in a corner facing the door of the first room and a photograph of Ivancha's eldest son, killed in the war, were also draped in creamy-white linen.

The first room contained a built-in brick stove with a nook above it big enough to hold a mattress. In the second room there were two iron bed-steads. There were two books visible, an anthology of Russian literature and a manual of pig-keeping. The rooms were spotlessly clean, the furniture simple but well-finished. The chairman's wife received us barefoot, wearing a knitted jersey, a muslin skirt and a kerchief wrapped around her head. Her son, attending school, wore a suit.

We visited many cottages like this and were impressed by their bright cleanliness, the modesty of their furnishing and the way that their occupants had laid on them the stamp of their personalities even though they had been living there for so short a time and had lost practically all their accumulated possessions during the war. Most of them had ikons and most of them commemorated young men fallen in the war. In no cases did we find pictures of Soviet leaders, these being reserved for the farm offices.

But there were other cottages at Kazorovichi where

standards were lower. These were the squalid lean-to sheds, built from pieces of salvage from the battle-field, where the villagers had taken refuge during their first winter of liberation. Ivancha was ashamed of them, he was angry they still housed about a hundred of his villagers, but he insisted on our seeing them.

The farm's chairman worked in a room just big enough to hold a deal table and five stools. On the walls there was a poster carrying one of the Central Committee's May Day slogans, and the text of Stalin's speech to the electorate in which the targets for Soviet production over the next 15 years were given. These targets were also the subject of a locally designed poster in the long covered porch where it is the custom for farmers to gather, waiting to call on the chairman or on the counting-house where three or four girls kept the books. Here, too, hung a map of the farm with some details of the extensions planned to its buildings during the next three or four years.

The largest room in the farm-offices was where the board of management held their conferences. Here there was a big board on which there was pinned a complete record of the pledges which the farm as a whole, and its separate links and brigades had made. These pledges or obligations were written by hand in a rather formal high-flown style and were addressed to Stalin. After stating his name the writer gave a promise to produce so much from a specified area of land. We were told that these promises were the result of consultations with the farm agronomist and that the amounts given had been arrived at scientifically. There was also a wall-newspaper consisting mostly of cuttings from the printed newspapers. They included a photograph of Field-Marshal Montgomery arriving in Moscow. The newspaper also contained pen-written items of local news from what was called the "production front." Its title, elaborately decorated with red crayon, was "For a

Stalinist Harvest."

The link-system referred to in the list of pledges had been introduced this year into the whole of the farm's organised labour force, we were told as we walked through the fields. We had noticed that the fields were frequently marked with stakes bearing pencilled numbers and signs.

" They have been put there by the link-leaders " Harchuk explained, " A link is a team usually of nine to fifteen people who have a piece of land assigned to them by the brigade they belong to. They work this land right through the season. There is nothing new in that of course. But this year we have introduced a different system of payment and this obliges the link to pay much more regard to the exact area it works and, especially, to the exact time taken over each process. You see, the old way of payment had one very serious failing, it did not offer enough encouragement to people to work fast and methodically. Let me give you an example. Two links are given the job of planting beets. One does the work punctually and has, say, 150 labour-days put to its credit. The other begins late after the weeds have set in and takes longer on the job, say 180 labour-days. Now under the old system the second link would be paid more than the first, simply because it had expended more labour-days. In fact, of course, the farms worked out all kinds of ways of preventing an injustice of this sort and before the war the Government had been recommending a premium system which would to some extent correct it. What we are doing this year is to put all work on a time basis. Every link knows not only what it has to do but how long it should spend on the job. If it does better than the plan it gets a bonus, if worse, it is fined. Just like in the factories."

" At the same time, we have changed the scale of norms. The old scale didn't attract people to the jobs requiring more skill or harder work simply because the payment wasn't

high enough compared with that for lighter or easier jobs. Most of the farms in this area were using norms that were fixed nearly fifteen years ago and conditions have changed since then. People have become more skilful as their technical experience has grown. Or perhaps I should say, some of them have, and it was precisely to help them that the changes in the scales were introduced. For instance up to this year a floor-sweeper was paid at the same rate as a reaper, though there is no doubt which of the two jobs is the more important. The new rates, in short, raise payment for the more important jobs and lower it for the less important ones."

" Doesn't this " I asked, " mean a weakening of the collective spirit and mightn't it create the very problem which collectivisation was meant to solve ; I mean, village pauperism ? "

" No " Harchuk replied, with the conviction of a man who had thought the answer out for himself. " The main source of the farm-worker's income remains his share of the collective fund. If, for example, a link gets a bigger crop than its quota, then three quarters of the benefit still goes to the farm as a whole, the rest forming the bonus. Everyone benefits from the good work of a single member of the collective just as everybody stands to lose something if an individual works badly. What we have done this year is to see that those who work well benefit a little more than the collective as a whole and vice versa. Once you have driven out of people the evil, acquisitive habits that derive from owning land that others work, there is no danger in letting people get some personal profit from the soil they themselves work. In fact it seems to make them work better. You can't really depersonalise farming. There is a relation between man and the soil he works with his hands that we must respect. Perhaps while we were mechanising farming so fast before the war we tended to

overlook the importance of bringing manual-processes into the scope of planning. But for some years ahead farming will need a lot of hand labour and we have had to bring the plan down to the lowest unit of organised labour."

" Take for example the position of this farm and the Machine Tractor Station that serves it with machines." Harchuk drew a notebook from his pocket and began to give us some figures. " Before the war eleven tractors and two combines were assigned to this farm by the Machine Tractor Station. All were lost during occupation. The MTS had 52 tractors before the war, now it has 32—that's not so bad, we've had a few from U.N.R.R.A. and we've had most of the rest from all over the Union—But listen to this ! Combines. In 1940, 15. Now none. Drills 21, now 11. Potato planters 15, now none. Potato diggers 20, now none. This means, in short, that for the processes of harvesting, planting and digging potatoes, spraying orchards and cleaning seeds this MTS which used before the war to help all the farms of the region, about 45, can do nothing this year. And of course that means that the farmers are driven back onto the primitive methods of twenty years ago. At the next farm to this a 160 hectare (400 acre) potato field was planted entirely by hand. 40,000 potatoes per hectare (16,000 potatoes per acre) and four processes for each one planted ! Yes, it looks all very wonderful in the record, but it's tragic. So, until the machines arrive we are doing our best to organise manual labour in the way that suits the farmers best, to make their work more interesting by organising competitions between links and brigades, to give them a more direct interest in raising the productivity of the land they work on, and, what is quite important, to protect the good worker from the slackers."

It was not easy to appreciate the darker tones in this picture of farming conditions while crossing the fields of the

" Red Partisan " farm. The spring-sown grain was shooting evenly and laid a tender green carpet over the lightly undulating fields divided with wild-cherry and apricot hedges planted as windbreaks against the north-easterly winds, the cruel dry wind that in half a day can smother a crop with sand swept up from the flood-plains of the Dnieper. From the new barns came the ringing sound of hammering. A pigtailed milk-maid showed us a list of her charges with details of their yield. She too had written a letter to Stalin making promises in the names of Golubka—the Little Dove—Rosa and Nemka—the German—the latter a rangily built Holstein. In the woodworking shop we found stacks of waggon hounds, tongues, hugs, spokes, soundly made from the willow and oak of the nearby forests. The shop was repairing sledges and building small trough-bedded wagons, as well as making window-sashes and doors for the barns. We saw an axle being made, the wheel bearings being hammered out as near true as possible. We visited a small general store managed by a village co-operative. Bread, soap, frying-pans, cooking-dishes, pails, brooms, twine, tooth-brushes, cosmetics, including lipsticks, toys, mouse-traps, shoes and a few pairs of goloshes, cloth by the yard, tea and matches were on sale. The village is laid out in streets, unpaved, and lined with cottages standing well forward in their gardens. On each tract we usually saw chickens and a cow, and we were told that on this farm more cows were owned individually than by the collective. The cottages varied in size from two to four rooms. The older houses usually had metal roofs, the newer ones were temporarily thatched. Some of the older houses were log-built with logs sawn on four sides and dove-tailed together in a very complicated intricate manner. These buildings looked straight and true and of excellent workmanship. The people we saw wore clothes that were neat and clean though old. They were living frugally, but decent stand-

ards were being maintained and there did not seem to be any real distress comparable with that of a part of the town population. When questioned about their views on the kolkhoz system they gave practical, never ideological or political reasons, for approval or disapproval of it. It was interesting to notice that nobody, including members of the farm management board and local officials, talked of the system as being permanent in its present form. Usually we found people agreeing that as a means for the poor farmer to raise his standard of living collectivisation had been successful. They recognised that if they were to re-divide the land among the families in the kolkhoz, the result would be holdings too small for any but the simplest implements and that there would not be enough machines and animals to go round. They saw the logic of investing a large proportion of the farm's annual income in new farm-buildings and machines. The war and the 1946 drought had provided them with fresh arguments in support of collectivisation, for it was patently clear Kazarovichi could not have been rebuilt so fast and so soundly and the little food available distributed so fairly had the collective not existed. On the other hand few concealed from us, even in the presence of officials, their discontent with their present living standards and their impatience to see improvements. Especially they seemed conscious of their isolation from town-life, the lack of cultural recreation, partly explainable by the absence of a new club and the shortage of cloth and shoes. Asked what they most desired, many replied that they wanted more time to spend on making articles for their own use and complained in particular of the waste of energy and time involved in selling their surplus products in the city.

"Yes," Ivancha said when I talked to him on these subjects, "it's not been easy for us to start all over again even though we are moving faster this time. If it hadn't

been for the war we should have finished our building plans by 1944. That would have meant that for the past three years about a quarter of our labour force would have been freed from construction jobs, quite apart from the easing of the pressure on the rest by using more machines. We would for instance have been bottling our own fruit instead of carting it to Kiev; we would have had enough lorries and vans to run our surplus into the city. That was what he used to talk about," he went on with a glance at the picture of his dead son. "Well, we've got to take the old hard slow road back to where we were in 1941. We've replaced all our barns, but as you see, they have thatched roofs. That can't stay for long. We haven't got a granary or a club yet. We haven't got electricity. We haven't got a secondary school within walking distance. We've one lorry. We've three motors instead of the eighteen we had before the war in the workshop. You can't expect people not to grumble. Personally, I think it's a good thing. It keeps people like me and Harchuk up to the mark and perhaps some of those much higher up, too."

It would be idle to consider this farm as representing an ultimate achievement, I said to myself on the way back to Kiev a few days later. It is a poor collective farm which has not as high a standard as many others. Before the war it was still developing and the outlook seemed brighter. Then the main handicap to progress was insufficient machinery at the Machine Tractor Station. What really matters is that after 85% destruction this farm should have got so far in two years of rehabilitation, and that, surely, is a testimonial to the spirit and stamina of the people. They had worked together in an orderly way, according to a plan, methodically. It spoke well for the soundness of the planning that a minimum standard of health and decent living should have been adhered to and that buildings should be of so good and durable construction. It is

creditable to those who designed the kolkhoz system that in a period when want might have been expected to have encouraged a selfish egoism among these stricken people, they respected the common weal and remained generally loyal to the fundamental principles of the system. With their inexpensive way of living, combined with the economics of large-scale farming, these people can look forward to wiping out their material losses in a few years and providing a higher standard of living to the next generation.

At this moment the next generation was represented by a band of schoolboys playing volley-ball on the village green. Watching them were the old folk and the youngsters, sitting close-packed in a long line on a bench outside the farm-office. The children carried sprigs of lilac and looked demure. But I had the impression that as we foreigners drove away they too regarded us with a look that contained a question and the shadow of a reproach.

* * * * *

The " Red Partisan " farm is but one of the 240,000 collective farms of the Soviet Union. The damage it sustained, its post-liberation problems, its successes in rehabilitation could be matched thousands of times elsewhere. At the time of liberation almost all the equipment of the farms of Byelorussia, the Ukraine and the occupied parts of Russia, had been destroyed or carried off. Obsolete hand-operated machinery with badly worn parts was being used with indifferent success over an area several times the size of Germany. A visit to any Machine Tractor Station in the liberated regions provided the same sickening picture of gutted buildings and wrecked machines. It was destruction of a totally different category than that brought to Germany by Anglo-American bombing for it was evenly

spread over town and country districts and completely wrecked rural economy.

In Byelorussia, for example, the sown area fell by 60% during the enemy's occupation. The planting of potatoes was reduced by three quarters, the sowing of flax by seven eighths. Over 400,000 agricultural cottages were destroyed. Sixty-five per cent of the collective-farmers' privately owned cattle were stolen. The farmers retained only one quarter of their horses. 270,000 hectares of reclaimed land reverted to marsh. Or take the county of Stalino, the main source of food for the Western part of the industrial Donetz basin. Here the farms lost 300,000 head of cattle, 103,000 horses, 200,000 established fruit-trees.

1945 was not marked by any major reforms in agricultural affairs and it was fully a year after the end of the war that the Government seriously took in hand the correction of various distortions in the system which investigation under the more searching light of peacetime conditions was to reveal. The authorities' main concern in 1945 was to help farmers find shelter, to increase the herds in liberated areas by sending back cattle from their temporary grazing grounds in the East, to reassert their influence on the science of agriculture by reappointing agronomists, many of whom were specially released from the Soviet Army for the purpose. While this first aid was being given not much attention was paid to the patient's general condition.

The approach was different in the following year. The State Plan for agriculture, made public early in March, referred pointedly to a number of short-comings in certain areas, in particular in the central Russian provinces of Tambov, Penza, Ryazan. The importance of raising the output of grain and of growing more potatoes near the cities, was a reflection of the Government's growing concern for it's people's food supplies, sharpened, no doubt, by reports reaching it from many parts of the Union of unnaturally

light snowfall in the crucial late February—early March period. An 8.2 million hectare increase in cultivated land over the 1945 level was demanded. This was about twice as much as the average annual opening-up of new land during the war. To stimulate higher output, management committees were advised to speed the introduction of individual and collective bonuses. Room was to be made at the Machine Tractor Stations for ex-servicemen, returning from the army with a new skill in handling machines. By and large, however, the 1946 plan was not an impressive document; it glossed over faults in kolkhoz administration which had become such public knowledge as to have reached the ears of foreign diplomats. Had I heard, a certain Ambassador asked me, tapping the table constantly with his pencil to prevent the operation of the microphone he was convinced was concealed in his office, had I heard that in many parts of the Soviet Union the collective-farm system had been abandoned?

It was not until after the harvest that the Government took action. For the first time since before the war a grave official indictment was made, with the maximum amount of publicity, against a substantial section of Soviet society. To read between the lines of the decisions taken by the Communist Party and the Soviet Government in September, 1946, is to find ample evidence, if not of an organised conspiracy against Soviet methods then at least of a widespread circumvention, with the connivance of state and party officials, of fundamental laws in the structure of the Soviet regime. Inevitably, some sections of the foreign press, gleefully anticipating the worst, wrote of a new purge, and in thus oversimplifying the issues involved, drew attention away from the real content of the Soviet Government's measures to raise the output of food, measures from which many non-Russian Europeans were later to benefit. It is sometimes claimed in support of the collective-farm system

that it places a curb on those acquisitive, conservative and frequently anti-social habits traditionally associated with the farmer's way of life, encouraging him to an attitude at once more co-operative with society and more scientific in regard to farming methods. The collective-farm system, it is claimed, removes the element of economic uncertainty from agricultural life thus freeing man from fear of want, and creating in him a bolder, more progressive and more generous spirit. Whatever there is to be said for this theory, the relapses in the condition of Soviet farming during the war may reasonably be attributed to the removal of that confidence in the future that was so striking a feature of Soviet life before the war. The faults revealed by the September decisions were widespread, they were undoubtedly serious, and they threatened the nation's food supplies. Yet on examination they turn out to be errors of a very human and natural kind, asking not for punishment but for correction. That, at least, appears to have been the Soviet Government's reading of the abuses brought to light in 1946. Its measures were lenient towards the rank-and-file peasant-farmer, many culprits suffered no more than the loss of property they had stolen, and cautions were administered far more widely than penalties.

There were five main points in the Government's indictment of the farming-community and those officials whose duty it was to administer the law and enforce communist discipline in agricultural areas. The first, in which the gravamen of the charge was contained, was that the value of the labour-day, the currency in which the farm-labour is rewarded, had been debased by the practice of overloading the administration with over-paid office-workers, by charging up to the farm's general expenses all kinds of auxiliary services benefiting only a small proportion of its members, and by offering too high a reward for easy jobs, too little for work requiring a higher degree of skill. As a con-

sequence of these practices, it was argued, the peasant-farmers were losing their respect for the labour-day. In other words, they were losing the incentive to work.

The Government then called attention to a widespread increase of individually owned tracts at the expense of the collective fields above the limit of about one acre permitted by the law. It also disclosed that much land had been grabbed from collective farms by factories and other organisations for their auxiliary farms and allotment patches. It accused local officials of state and party organisations of levying tolls in kind from the farms and of " dipping shamelessly into kolkhoz pockets as if they were their own." In other lands such practices would have been called " black-marketeering." In socialist Russia the offenders were slated in franker terms; they were enemies of society. For such offences some officials were removed from office, some were sentenced to several years' imprisonment.

Finally, the government complained that many collective-farms had abandoned the practice of holding general meetings for the purpose of keeping democratic control over the management committees, and that some chairmen and members of management boards were over-staying their elected terms of office.

Printed in *Pravda* with a sharply worded preamble and bearing the signature of Governmental and party leaders the document listing these charges and the corrective measures decided on wore a formidable appearance, and when the effects of the reforms were published the sum-total of error and abuse made an impressive list. On the other hand, it must be remembered that there are a quarter of a million collective-farms in the Soviet Union and between 19 and 20 million families engaged in kolkhoz production. The lapses were not considered serious enough for the Government to have attributed to them any part in the failure of the 1946 harvest. Nature was the

" wrecker " made responsible for that and nature alone took the rap.

Simultaneously with the publication of the September decisions, a document was reprinted which had been originally issued in 1939 over the signatures of Stalin and Molotov calling for a halt in the practice of extending individual tracts at the expense of collective fields and establishing a minimum number of work-days which had to be put into the common pool to qualify a farmer for membership of the kolkhoz. The size of tracts was fixed at a little more than one acre not including ground covered by buildings and the labour-day minimum was established at 60 a year for the northern regions, 80 a year for most other parts of the Soviet Union.

The individual tracts referred to are the gardens attached to farmers' cottages. While houses and their contents are inalienable property, the ownership of the ground is governed by the same principle by which the kolkhoz holds its land—it belongs to the collective for as long as they use it. But the state has no power to direct farmers how to use their individual tracts. It levies a very small tax in kind for which various substitutes are permissible. The collective farmer is thus his own master in his house and garden, as long as he contributes the required minimum of working-days to the collective and does not keep more than one cow and two calves, one sow and her litter, ten sheep and 20 beehives. For his work he is paid in cash and kind according to the farm's net income after provision has been made for obligatory deliveries to the State and Machine Tractor Stations, and for the seed, building, insurance and cultural funds. Three kilogrammes of bread and rather larger quantities of various kinds of vegetables is roughly the rate of reward in kind for a working-day, with an additional cash payment of 3 to 5 roubles, the main source of cash being the returns for the farmer's private sale of his surplus

to co-operatives or directly on the markets. If other members of the household work they qualify for a share of the farm's income whether they are members of the kolkhoz or not, though membership is open to all over 18 who put in the required minimum of working-days and to the householder's wife whether she works or not. Expulsion from the collective is possible only after a majority decision of a general meeting attended by at least two-thirds of the membership. Former kulaks and members of their families who have been exiled for anti-collective work may form collectives after three years.

The winter of 1946, the hardest period Russia has been through since the end of the war, was attended by preliminaries for the great campaign opened in February which was to lead to the outstandingly successful 1947 harvest. Little came to light in the newspapers of the measures that were being taken in the country to correct the abuses revealed in the September statement. Occasional publicity was given to the removal from office of party and state officials found guilty of breaking the law and there were some convictions in the courts. Perhaps the busiest people during that period were the book-keepers, for a thorough overhaul of the valuation of the labour-day had been called for, and this involved investigation into the rates of pay of thousands of different jobs connected with the practice of agriculture throughout the Union.

The scope of the operations conducted during that winter by the Extraordinary Council for Kolkhoz affairs under Andrei Andreyev was revealed only in March, 1947 when it was learned that action had been taken in 198 thousand collective-farms, 90% of those investigated by January 1st, and that over two and a quarter million cases of wrongful acquisition of kolkhoz land had been brought to light and corrected, resulting in the return of 4.7 million hectares, ($11\frac{1}{2}$ million acres) to collective cultivation. Of this, it

was reported, 4 million hectares (10 million acres) had been illegally acquired by various organisations, the rest by individuals, mostly farmers.

456,000 persons had been removed from non-productive administrative positions on the farms and added to the labour force, while another 182 thousand who had no proper connection with the farms, lost their claims on the distributed farm-income. Back to the farms went 140 thousand head of cattle which in one way and another had found their way into private cow-sheds.

February and early March is the planning period in Soviet agriculture. It is then that from every kolkhoz its chairman, agronomists and most experienced members go to attend regional conferences called by the Regional Executive Committee on which the All-Union Ministry of Agriculture is represented by a permanent official. But before attending these conferences and learning the government's views on the tasks for the farming year, the farmers' representatives arm themselves with the proposals they have themselves worked out in consultation with their experts. These require endorsement by a general meeting of the kolkhoz and form the basis for the protracted and often tough bargaining that goes on at most regional conferences. The government spokesman announces the quantities and qualities of various sorts of produce that are required by the state, the figure usually being given in an absolute figure based on the total area of cultivable land in the region. There is not likely to be any dispute at this stage about the estimated area, but the conference will discuss the totals and among themselves the farmers will seek to reach compromises as to how they are to distribute production among the several farms. The importance of this conference lies in the fact that once the plan has been accepted it obtains the force of law. But before it is accepted each kolkhoz-chairman will have laid before the conference

his farm's proposals, these will have been co-ordinated into a regional plan and this in turn will have been compared with the requirements of the state. How far the Government's representative is empowered to compromise is not clear but the answers of most farmers with whom the writer has discussed this question suggest that there is a margin for compromise and that the conferences are usually held in a spirit of give-and-take. The chairmen return to their farms knowing precisely what the Government's requirements are in the form of obligatory deliveries. The rest is up to them and their fellow-workers.

On the eve of this vitally important period in 1947, the Central Committee of the Communist Party held a plenary session devoted to the subject of agriculture at which Andrei Andreyev reported on the results of his investigations and made a number of far-reaching recommendations practically all of which were agreed and incorporated in a party decree. The absence of any reference to the Government as co-sponsor of the measures called for by this decree was noteworthy, particularly as the September decisions from which they stemmed had been issued over the signatures of Stalin, as Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Andrei Zhdanov, as principal secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. The most reasonable explanation of the exclusively party character of the initiation of the campaign to develop agriculture in the post-war period is that many of the measures envisaged were of an experimental nature which it was probably not thought wise to write into a new statute for collective-farming until the experience of the 1947 farming year had tested their efficacy. But it may also be that the Communists judged this to be an occasion calling for a demonstration of their power and ability to lead the State. Whatever its causes the Central Committee's plenary session was the opening move in the most carefully planned and most resolutely

executed intervention in Soviet affairs that the Communist Party had undertaken since before the war. The entire Russian scene during 1947 was dominated by the " struggle for the harvest," as it came to be called, and it is in the fluctuating course of this struggle absorbing so much of the nation's energy and talent that one must search for the explanation of many of the Soviet Government's actions during that year in international as well as in domestic affairs.

For what was seen to be at stake was the role the Soviet Union could afford to play in world affairs during the next few years. Was her foreign policy to be backed with the power of an exportable grain surplus and an industry moving methodically through rehabilitation? Or was her voice to be blurred by the murmur of her dissatisfied people, and disappointed clients? The Russians do not need to be taught that an empty sack cannot stand up or that horses are driven not by the whip but by oats.

From the point of view of the rank-and-file farm-worker the most important features of the party's February decree were that he would in future have to work harder for the minimum rewards but that the more diligent he was the higher would be his rate of reward. It amounted, in fact, to the application to agriculture of the principle of the " progressivka,"—the progressive bonus—whose functioning in industry we have noted earlier. The war-time increases in the obligatory minimum working day for collective-farm workers were confirmed, and an end was put to levelling tendencies by a readjustment of norms on the principle of higher pay for work of greater importance and lower pay for secondary work.

For the more advanced workers, brigade or link-leaders, the chief significance of the new measures was the obligation placed on kolkhozes to begin the agricultural year with a plan for the expenditure of working days for individual

branches, and to distribute kolkhoz income so that account was taken of the harvest gathered by each brigade or link, with higher pay for better harvests and lower pay for smaller harvests.

For the boards of management and their chairmen the decree signified that the 1940 method of estimating the size of obligatory deliveries to the state according to the total *cultivatable* as distinct from *cultivated* area of the farm was to remain but that the single norm of compulsory deliveries of grain to the state for all kolkhozes in one region was being replaced by a number of norms which took into account the local farming conditions. Thus, in regions where there was labour shortage or where production was handicapped by war-damage, norms were to be reduced, while in more fortunate districts they were to be increased.

From the farming community as a whole the decree demanded a strenuous effort particularly in the field of wheat production " to allow for an abundance of food." It promised a spurt in tractor production, 34,000 for agriculture in 1947, 67,000 in 1948, and it called for an extension of the acreage under grain by 31 million acres (12.4 million hectares) during 1947-48. These tasks, it said, could not be fulfilled without tension and struggle, without an end being put to bureaucratic methods of management, without the mobilisation of the energy and ability of all farm workers.

The governmental machine at once went into operation to support the party's decisions with administrative measures. Simultaneously, under Communist stimulus, the agricultural workers of the Soviet Union responded with a clamorous demonstration of their concurrence in the new deal. And fortunately for everybody nature went onto its best behaviour.

Three ministries were combined into a new Ministry of Agriculture, an increase of 33% in the All-Union budget allocation for agriculture was agreed by the Supreme Soviet,

a list of the awards that could be gained by diligent work was published and described as a means of raising the sense of personal responsibility among farm workers.

To regulate relations between farms and Machine Tractor Stations of which there had been many complaints in 1946, the post of deputy director for political affairs was created and filled by many who had previously served as political officers in the Red Army. A State Inspectorate for calculating the harvest and reporting its findings to the State Planning Commission was hailed on its formation as signifying an end of the deliberate under-estimation of crops, of which some farmers were held guilty.

From the foothills of the Altai Mountains, near Mongolia, came the first collective promise that the plan would be overfulfilled. Soon afterwards, *Pravda* threw out its features, all other home news and half the contents of its foreign news page to print the detailed pledge to Stalin by the farm-workers of Kazakhstan. In the Ukraine a Republican conference of leading agricultural workers was held. Even the " advanced melon-growers " of Astrakhan found it necessary to confer. At the end of March the Moscow newspapers announced that spring-sowing had begun in the South.

Meanwhile the Communist Party was directing many experienced members to country districts. The return of the demobilised soldiers had substantially increased the number of party members in a sector of society where it had hitherto been weakest, and the party lost no time in making use of them as the spearhead of its drive for production : 1947 saw the creation of thousands of primary party cells in farms and villages, with membership ranging from 10 to 18 persons, of whom most, and in many cases, all, were ex-soldiers. In the Kharkov province (oblast) for example, there were 1,117 party organisations in the kolkhozes on June 1st, 1947 compared with 498 on June 1st, 1942, and

over half of their members were rank-and-file farm-workers. During the harvest campaign the party sent out 350 lecturers and propagandists and mobilised 50,000 helpers from the population of Kharkov. In the Tambov province, where results had been poor both in '45 and '46, about 600 new party cells were created and what was described as " an army of agitators," some 20,000 strong, put to work during the harvest period. A region in the Moscow province reported the recruitment of 61 kolkhoz chairmen, 46 brigadiers, 28 agronomists, 39 school-teachers and 23 doctors into the Communist Party. In the whole Moscow province 416 new primary organisations were formed. From Kursk it was announced that three quarters of the 120 deputy directors for political affairs in the Machine Tractor Stations of the province were ex-servicemen and that 74 of them had been party members for over ten years. Any demobilised soldier who imagined that on returning to the farm he would escape from the atmosphere of tension and urgency which is the duty of a communist to create was to be rudely shocked. There were few Soviet villages so remote that they escaped the attentions of the agitators and propagandists in 1947.

The party saw to it that the full glare of publicity was turned onto the country during the summer. Radio and the press co-operated to bring home to the factory worker and city-dweller the drama and scope of the " battle for grain." Reports from all over the Union, set out almost in the form of the daily communiques to which the public had become accustomed during the war, enabled one to follow the campaign's course. Every important rain-fall was announced. Publicists who had made their reputation by their exhortatory articles during the war went to the villages for material with which to spur the workers on. The barriers between town and country, always flimsy in this country, went down completely. The people of

Moscow talked, sang and prayed about the harvest, and few items of news were received with such enthusiasm as the announcement, on July 4th, that 11 train loads of flour had reached the capital.

During the celebrations of the 30th anniversary of the Revolution Mr. Molotov was able to announce that the grain deliveries of 1947 were roughly equal to those of the best pre-war years, news which coupled with that of the attainment of the pre-war level of industrial output was received with considerably more acclamation than the Soviet Foreign Minister's announcement that the " secret " of the atomic bomb was no longer a secret.

Later in the year it was officially announced that the Government was able to dispose of practically as much grain as in the best pre-war year. In 1948 the harvest was described as reaching the best pre-war level with a higher grain yield per acre. The 1949 harvest as expected has reached new records, exceeding the gross cereal crop of 110 million tons obtained in 1940. In future, it seems, increases will be achieved by more intensive methods of culture and soil amelioration rather than by breaking new ground. A remarkable step in the struggle with drought was taken in October, 1948, when a plan to plant several thousands of miles length of shelter belts across South Russia and to crisscross most of the Ukraine and the rest of the Black-Earth belt with plantations of trees was launched. With these methods Soviet agronomists hope to retain the winter snow cover and to prevent the loss of top soil which has in the past made farming precarious in one of the most fertile areas of the world.

Chapter Four

WHO THINKS WHAT?

We have seen the efforts made to provide the people of the Soviet Union with work, homes and food during the post-war years. What, however, of the moral and political consequences of the war? What are the principle ideas abroad in the Soviet Union today? What are people thinking about? And what does their government want them to think about?

The idea that seemed to be dominating thought in post-war Russia was that of liberation. The experience of captivity through which many had passed, the presence of the enemy on their soil, had, it appeared, revived those anxieties about the durability of their country's independent existence which from time to time haunt the Russian mind. When the war ended in victory, the people gave thanks not only for the defeat of the Germans but for the failure of what they saw as an attempt to put the clock back and reduce them to a colonial or semi-colonial condition. It is unlikely that when the British people were faced in 1940 with the possibility of a successful German invasion many of them pictured to themselves what the permanent effect on their lives would be of the loss of their independence. The nations of the Soviet Union, on the other hand, knew what foreign domination meant from their recent experience. Their people were brought up on tales of foreign yoke, foreign intervention. A great deal of communist propa-

ganda in support of the Soviet regime had been directed towards convincing the working class that the Tsarist capitalists were financed largely by foreign money and that Russia was a colony. During the war the most widespread publicity had been given to the projects of Goering and Rosenberg to colonize the Ukraine. Soviet patriotism was defined as " springing from a Revolution that freed the country from landlords and capitalists and bringing to an end its existence as a colonial land," and no trouble was spared to convince the Soviet people that if the colonists returned they would again be reduced to the status of an inferior people, without the power to develop their country's resources and to benefit from their own inventiveness and talent. They were reminded that on the eve of the first world war foreign capital owned 72% of the output of Russian metallurgy, 60% of the total extraction of oil, 90% of all basic capital in the electrical enterprises in Russia and 70% of the total extraction of coal in the Donbass.

Closely linked with this notion that victory had averted the loss of any further possibility to exploit the resources of their land for their own benefit and thus to attain socialism, was the idea that the whole field of opportunity opened up by the Revolution to the individual had been imperilled by the war. In this respect, it is to be noted that practically everybody born since 1900 who had made a success of his life owed it to Soviet education, and that this includes most of the senior officers, factory managers and leading administrators and experts in the country. Drawn for the most part from the poorest class in Russian society, the sons and daughters of landless peasants or proletarian workers, those who had poured into the technical schools and institutes opened so soon after the Revolution, or had stepped fast up the ladder of promotion to fill the vacant places, did not need to be reminded of their debt to socialism. Dmitri Shostakovich once told me that if the state had not supported

him with a scholarship at the Leningrad Conservatoire during the famine years of the 20's, he would have been obliged to abandon his career. " In what other country of the world could I have become an admiral ? " asked the Commander-in-Chief of the Black Sea Fleet, Admiral Oktyabryski, whose father worked 46 years as a boilerman in St. Petersburg. Wherever one looks in Soviet life, one finds men who have risen, usually as the result of the way they have grasped educational opportunities, from positions where at the time of their childhood it seemed they were destined to remain. In a country where opportunity beckons so insistently the appeals of Soviet leaders for the most selfless devotion to patriotic duty awoke in many minds the sense that they were fighting for future generations for whom life would be easier and fuller.

While the war was still in progress the suspicions had arisen in many Russian minds that there was a danger of their being robbed of the fruits of victory. Some believed that a victorious Soviet Union emerging on the scene of world affairs would encounter serious opposition from the capitalist powers and were accordingly highly sensitive to any sign of Anglo-American co-operation that seemed to leave the Soviet Union out of account. Fuel was added to these smouldering fires of suspicion by the reluctance of the Foreign Office and the State Department to break decisively with resistance leaders and politicians who, whatever their record against the Germans, were notoriously anti-Russian or anti-Communist. Others expressed the opinion that the role Russia had been caste to play in the war was once again to spill her blood so copiously that her voice would be too faint to be heard in the making of the peace. One of the most persistent of the many rumours that Soviet domestic propaganda had to fight against was a revival among the simplest of their people of the World-War I legend that there existed a secret compact according to

which Russia had agreed to contribute human lives, her allies ammunition, to the war effort. The general mood was perhaps best summed up to me by Mr. Ivan Maisky in the words, spoken with great emphasis in 1944. " Our people are determined not to be made fools of this time."

Victory did not allay these doubts. Indeed it put the Russian more vigilantly on guard for their interests. They noted the increasing attention paid by the British press and wireless to incidents in occupied Germany and liberated territory in Eastern Europe arising out of lapses of discipline by individual Red Army men and saw in this evidence of a deliberate policy to deflate the reputation Russia had won among the British working class. Their leaders, at least, were probably aware of the growing concern that had been expressed privately in Foreign Office circles since 1941 about this Russian popularity, this " temporary intoxication of British public opinion " as a Foreign Office official described it to me in 1943. People who believed it would have been unpatriotic to criticise an ally during the war were giving vent to feelings that had been bottled up for years. Dissident Poles, Balts, Croats and others found they could give free rein to their anti-Russian sentiments, and they brought into English political life a bitter continental intolerance which though unfamiliar was not without effect. From an audience of such people and their supporters it was possible to evoke a defiant cheer within three months of VJ day by calling on the Red Army to pull out immediately from the countries it had liberated. British troops, it is to be noted, were at that time in Greece, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Denmark.

It happened that when this campaign of vilification and provocation was at its height, a large group of Soviet visitors was in England, attending a World Youth Festival. Some of them were people prominent in political life, and the views they expressed on their return were later to be of

great importance in moulding Soviet opinion towards England.

I asked one of them what he thought about the British press. " What worries me most " he replied after a few moments' reflection, " is the little trouble your papers seem to take to make their readers think. They create a pattern of feeling—not of thought—by an ingenious selection of news. Take the question of Russia, for instance. There were a lot of stories about the Red Army while we were in England. Far more, incidentally, than there were about us, though most of our delegation had fought in the war. Some journalist or diplomat runs up against a Red Army sentry in Poland or Hungary or Vienna and is detained for a couple of hours. Up go the headlines " Briton arrested by Soviets " and so on. Now, I don't deny your right to feel indignant about things like that. Our people would react in the same way. But how many people ask themselves why these incidents happen ? And if they do think about them, how many are content with the old stereotyped answer of ' Red Terror ' or ' Police State ? ' It seems to me that your newspapers don't want people to think these things out for themselves, but just to feel about them, to react emotionally to the banner-headline. But you can't have an understanding between peoples based on emotions alone, whether they are friendly or unfriendly. Why don't your newspapers realise that we are a young socialist state with literally millions of state employees each of them responsible for his own sector of national work. If we are to have efficiency, honesty, and alertness, we must instill in all these people a sense of responsibility and that, at present, means they must carry out their instructions rigidly. Perhaps later on when we are older, and when there's a longer tradition of conscientious fulfilment of duty, we shall be able to leave more decisions to personal judgment. But in the meantime we all have to suffer a good deal of incon-

venience. But don't think it's vigilance for vigilance's sake. The alternative, I am afraid, would be a slackness that would do our country a great deal of harm."

" Or take the question of our so-called Asiatic troops," he went on. " Your papers have been making great play of the fact that some of our soldiers are Mongolian or from Central Asia, and that we are somehow letting Europe down by bringing them into Germany. Does it occur to them that this is the result of something of which we are very proud and which, incidentally, helped to save England from defeat in the war. We have raised the cultural standards of our entire Soviet Union so high that we were able to apply mobilisation everywhere, irrespective of colour or race. The whole 200 million of our people went to war against Fascism. If you could have said the same about the British Empire how much shorter the war would have been ! The Uzbeks and Buryat Mongolians and Tadzhiks who fought in the Red Army had the same education as we Russians and in the army were treated on exactly the same terms as anybody else. Can you say that for your Indian and East African divisions ? And yet far from giving us credit for what you call our ' colonial policy,' and what we prefer to call our nationalities policy, your papers slander our Red Army with words like ' Asiatic ' and ' Mongolian.' No wonder Britain's so unpopular in the East ! "

The sensitiveness to criticism which this and comment in similar vein revealed was probably partly to be explained by the Russians' discovery after the war that the limelight of fame was less bright than they had expected it to be. The celebration of victory, the giving of honours where honour was due, the reliving of triumphs, were carried out in a far more ceremonious and protracted manner in Russia than elsewhere in the allied camp. Britain worked off its victory fever in a few days of spontaneous celebration. In Russia the process was more gradual. For many months

the Red Army basked in the sun of adulation. For at least eighteen months the Russian theatre was dominated by war plays analysing the causes of victory and paying tributes in turn to the generals, the rank-and-file soldiers, the partisans, and members of other fighting services. It was a demonstration of national pride, not of militarism. It was the affirmation of the fact, the incredible, the long-prayed-for, the stupendous fact summed up in the slogan one saw everywhere in 1945 and 1946, " We were victorious." It is not surprising that in such an atmosphere the Russians should often have thought the rest of the world was over-looking their great contributions to its security.

Thus through the first year of peace there grew, together with the feeling of having been liberated from the threat of annihilation, a sense of exasperation with countries that seemed to be denying the Soviet Union her rights. And this gradually merged with the notion, never very far from the surface of the Soviet mind, of her isolation in a hostile environment.

This exasperation came to a head in the summer of 1946 when the Communist Party made a typically oblique intervention in the ideological field. The man chosen to use the lancet was the late Andrei Zhdanov, first Secretary of the Central Committee but not a member of the Government. His address to the Leningrad Branch of the Union of Soviet Writers was, in itself, a local affair and it was not for several weeks after its delivery that it was made public. But the importance of a sermon does not depend on the size of the pulpit. Zhdanov's speech was carried to every corner of the land by the Party's propaganda machinery.

There is little doubt that much that he said about the short-comings of contemporary Soviet literature reflected the opinions of a considerable section of the public, and that he was putting into words the half-felt disappointment of many who had looked in vain to the writers for a lead in

the post-war period. When he appealed to novelists and playwrights to leave their ivory towers and go out among the people in search of subjects on contemporary themes, he but echoed the words one frequently heard in those days from engineers, skilled workers and others on whom the tasks of reconstruction were devolving. Imaginative fiction exercises a powerful influence on the Russian mind and its heroes play an important part in shaping people's thoughts and behaviour. I remember the words of a mining engineer from the Donbass who after spending an evening with me at a performance of an Italian opera, complained that the contemporary theatre did not provide a single character on whom the workers could model their lives.

Perhaps Zhdanov spoke for fewer when he attacked Mikhail Zoshchenko for upholding monkey-morality* to Soviet youth and alleged that the poetess Anna Akhmatova was both erotic and mystical, for neither of these writers had for several years enjoyed general popularity. They were selected as the target for Zhdanov's attacks less for their own shortcomings than for the opportunity it gave him to point to certain symptoms of ' Western decadence ' in their work. It was their alleged loss of faith in man, their unwillingness to place ' lofty aims ' before them that were subjected to attack. At no point in his speech was Zhdanov so close to public opinion as when he summoned the writers to take the offensive against foreign slanderers of Soviet achievements, to become the hammer instead of the anvil, and to infuse a sense of pride in socialism into their works. It was in these passages calling for a " glance into the nation's morrow " and an exposure of all that was obsolete and dying in the capitalist world that he gave vent to the feelings of frustration and exasperation to which, as we have indicated above, the restless post-war Soviet man

* A reference to a short story about a monkey which escapes from the Zoo and by stealing, getting out of line in shopping queues, and flouting other regulations finds that he can live more comfortably than the average human being.

was prone.

One of the problems with which the student of Soviet affairs is constantly faced is how to distinguish in Communist Party decisions between that which come from above arbitrarily and that which comes from below spontaneously. It seems safe enough to assume that in matters of policy concerning defence, foreign affairs and the development of the country's resources the process of consultation is confined to the Central Committee and its experts. This is not to say that discussion at that level is not frank, prolonged and sometimes thorny, though in its final stages it probably resolves into unanimous decisions, since Communist discipline requires the individual " to fuse himself in the common flame " as the synthesis of different wills emerges on a level higher than the will of any individual member of the collective.

When the Party is preparing to take action in less specialised fields, on the other hand, it consults and encourages discussion at a much lower level. Indeed, its decision to act may originate in a movement of opinion among the masses, as to some extent it seems to have done in the case of its intervention in Kolkhoz affairs in 1946, when reports were being received of the discontent among rank-and-file peasants caused by frequent cases of the exploitation of the collectives by individuals. For whom then was Zhdanov speaking at Leningrad ?

I believe that he was speaking for an important and influential section of the Communist Party supported by a proportion of non-Communists who had borne the heaviest share in the conduct of the war. The product of Soviet education and training, deeply conscious of Soviet power as the force that had opened the door of opportunity before them, these men and women are intensely loyal to Soviet ideals. They include men like Lt.-Gen. Rodimtsev, defender of Stalingrad, the son of a poor peasant, and

Marshal Rokossovsky, whose father was a shoe-maker, Air-Marshal Vershinin, breadwinner for a family of 7 at the age of 15, Admiral Golovko, Commander of the Arctic Fleet long before he was forty. In the field of industry they are represented by such men as Roman Belan, son of a hired labourer, who for the past eight years has been in charge of the Kuznetsk Metallurgical Combine, or as the three sons of Ivan Korobov, worker at the Makeyevka Metallurgical Works, one of whom is a Vice-Minister of Heavy Engineering, another the director of the designing institute of the Ministry of the Machine-Building Industry, the third in charge of a big metal works at Dniepropetrovsk. And for everyone who has risen to positions of authority there are hundreds of others who see the ladder of promotion before them, broad and not very steep as the expansion of Soviet industry and science continues.

They are rather stern, very earnest and quite sure of themselves, these successful Soviet citizens. They burn themselves up with over-work, for however efficient they may be themselves, they are at the mercy of the young and still inexperienced machine of Soviet administration. For them a holiday is a chance to regain lost sleep, and leave a visit to a sanatorium. There is a cold lucidity in the way they discuss their work and a style of clear exposition which derives from the emphasis laid on logic in Soviet education. I have never heard a Russian factory manager, high official or responsible professional worker fumble with facts or fail to give a clear picture in conference with foreign correspondents, not always the easiest of interrogators. Their candour is often disarming.

Their interests are exclusively absorbed in their work. They have no hobbies, play no sport, belong to no social clubs, not because they have closed their minds to such relaxations but because the exigencies of the times deny them. The plot of one of the most successful comedies in

the Leningrad theatre in 1945 turned on the improbability of the event of a factory director going to a theatre.

They remain close to the people, because they come from the people, have brushed shoulders with them all their lives and are offered no alternative in the form of a managerial class or narrow professional organisation. Any stratification that may have been caused in Soviet life as a whole by the creation of various ranks and the wide divergences in income finds no parallel in Party circles.

But they are far from idealising the people and draw a distinction between the Russian man and what is known as the Soviet man, in other words between man as he is and man as he is in the process of becoming. Nowhere are the faults of the Russian nature, the " birth-marks of the past," so sharply criticised as in Soviet Russia itself. It is left to the foreigners to fall in love with Russia as it exists, incomplete, struggling within itself.

On the only occasion that I was received by a member of the Politbureau I referred to the traditional bravery of the Russian soldier. The battle of Stalingrad was in progress. Comrade Shcherbakov bridled. " Don't talk to me about the Russian soul " he said, " Let me recommend you to study Soviet man." Four years later Zhdanov was saying much the same thing to the Leningrad writers. " The Russia of today is not the Russia of yesterday, and the Russia of tomorrow will again be a different one."

This interest in human nature and the belief that it can be re-shaped by changing the material conditions in which it exists gives contemporary Russia a peculiarly moral atmosphere. Though Zhdanov was speaking about the subject matter of Soviet literature he was in fact concerned with Soviet morality, and in this he was the spokesman of the most vigorous elements in the Communist Party who look forward impatiently to the time when a fully Communist society has been created in their country. He was

their spokesman again when he called for a rebuff to attacks made on the Soviet system by its foreign critics. His intervention was specially welcomed in these circles because it contained a reaffirmation of the notion that the path the Soviet Union was taking was a completely new one.

As may be expected, the Leningrad address had far-reaching repercussions. The expulsion of Zoshchenko and Akhmatova from the Union of Writers—the former was subsequently readmitted—and the reshuffle on the Union's Committee which brought Alexander Fadeyev and Konstantin Simonov to the forefront, were the least of these results. More important was the gradual emergence of a new hero-type in contemporary Soviet literature, more self-assured, prouder of Soviet achievements and well-provided with arguments in favour of Soviet Socialism's superiority over other systems. Whether the change marks an advance or a reverse for Soviet literature is a matter of opinion, but of the popularity of the new school there is no doubt, the masses responding to the new didactic note warmly.

We find a new emphasis being laid on the theory of a special Communist ethic. " Communist morality " we read in a Trade Union newspaper " is first of all supreme devotion to the cause of Communism, self-sacrificing service to the motherland." This remains, and is likely for a long time to remain, the principle theme of Soviet literature during a period when the state requires " inspired, creative labour " to carry it through the arduous reconstruction period. Everything that is most humane, we read further, is engraved in the principles of Communist morality—honesty, truthfulness, self-sacrifice, courage, fearlessness, comradely solidarity, modesty, intolerance towards selfishness, towards egoism, hypocrisy and officiousness . . . .

Communists are warned to be on their guard against the dangerous vestiges of the past, habits and customs inherited from a society based on private property. These habits,

like weeds, are eating into Soviet life and must be uprooted by painstaking educational work.

How, one newspaper asked, were these survivals of the past manifested ? The answer throws some light on conditions in contemporary Soviet society. *Trud* continues—" A petty-bourgeois lack of discipline is still strong in production where there are people who want to take as much as possible from the state and to give as little as possible. Strong, still, is a scornful attitude towards labour, indifferent work, carelessness, unwillingness to think and to step outside the framework of a stagnant life, the desire to live the old way, a lack of understanding of the new—a dangerous phenomenon which slows down our further development, our technical progress and at the same time the productivity of labour. We still have idlers who affix themselves to someone of higher rank and seek by fawning and flattery to create advantages. There is impudence towards people, a disdainful attitude towards subordinates, visitors, petitioners and towards the letters of workers. One can still meet the petty-bourgeois mentality of the greedy, selfish, property owner. . . . ."

Such articles appearing in 1947 in the official organ of the Trade Union movement provided the masses with a fine supply of ammunition to let off against their superiors.

Communist morality is not a rule of behaviour whose application is restricted to public life. A feuilleton published in the Komsomolskaya Pravda illustrates the Party's views on this matter ; " There was a meeting of the Komsomol organization at Baku airport " it ran. " There was a discussion on the way of life of the Komsomol member Savka. Savka had abandoned his wife a week before she was due to become a mother. Savka turned his attentions to another young woman. He had already been married to four girls."

" Such a young man has nothing in common with a

member of the Komsomol. Nevertheless the secretary of the Komsomol organisation was reluctant to include the question of Savka's way of life on the agenda."

" Such a state of affairs is quite impermissible. In the Soviet Union, the family is built up on the love and mutual respect of the wife and her husband. The private life of Komsomol members cannot be free from the scrutiny and criticism of their fellows."

Trud called attention to " bourgeois survivals in the family, manifested in sexual dissoluteness, in a flippant attitude towards marriage, in a lack of attention to the education of children." How long ago seems the time when that trustworthy observer of Soviet life, Maurice Hindus, was writing that chastity as a principle and a practice had ceased to have any meaning in Russia, that the family had been made a matter of voluntary union and that the spirit of free love reigned supreme !

Comrade Zherdev, we read in *Pravda* in July 1947, was a railway worker who refused to recognise his daughter at a chance encounter. She was the child of his second wife whom he had abandoned for a third, taking with him the family's fuel and ration cards. Called to the Procurator's office Zherdev replied that his private life was his own business in which the legal authorities had no right to interfere. Learning that Zherdev was a candidate for Party membership the Procurator considered it his duty as a Communist to inform the Party Bureau of the Railway Board of Zherdev's behaviour. Unfortunately, *Pravda* added, for six months the Party Bureau had not found time to consider the case, the Deputy Secretary apparently considering the private life of Communists as being outside the competence of the Bureau. Zherdev, the newspaper concluded, had forgotten that " the sacred doors of the Party are not entered by people with clean collars but dirty

biographies—dirtied no matter whether in public or in so-called 'private' life."

This new accent on respectability is particularly noticeable in the schools, where during the war, a set of rules was introduced and remains in force. According to these, children are to be polite to their elders, to behave with modesty, to help the old and infirm, to obey their parents and respect the honour of their school. Such rules are commonplace in most lands. They fell with the effect of a bombshell in the Russia of which Mr. Hindus had written, "Nowhere in the world is youth so independent of parental authority or of the guidance of elders—nowhere so habituated to the notion of sex equality and sex freedom. . . . ."

Sometimes the campaign for a code of behaviour in keeping with the high calling of 'comrade' took an amusing turn. "The picture is well known to everyone" *Trud* wrote, under the title "Man a Comrade to Man," of the active gentleman with the nice open face who arrives brightly at the tram stop whistling "Toreador" but who is transformed into some sort of wild boar with the arrival of a tram. He is suffering from the only too common complaint of tram psychosis. To stand on someone else's foot, to lean on their shoulder, to rest a packet of smelly fish on someone's lap are acts committed by many of our tramcar comrades."

"Trolley bus conductors are of special ferocity. It does not apparently matter to them in the least if they separate children from their mother, if they send off a half-empty bus leaving a tottery old man clambering on to the steps. They seem to take a peculiar pleasure in catching the hands and legs of passengers in their automatic doors." "We do not propose that our tram comrades should buy each other tickets and kiss the conductor's hand. It is merely a question of putting into practice the slogan—"Be mutually polite."

"A comrade may return home and at once turn on his wireless set. He may even forget to turn it off before leaving for work or even before going on holiday. In some places it seems to be regarded as normal to have a neighbour who is agreeable all week but who gets fighting drunk on his day off."

"We should like to remind some of our comrades" *Trud* concluded "that they must live up to this calling everywhere. They must not cast off this lofty name in the hall with their goloshes."

With the exception of these occasional lapses into humour, however, the drive to create the conviction that Soviet man is the ideal of the progressive man of modern times, "lacking organically many of the negative traits typical of character distorted under bourgeois circumstances" as a writer in *Red Star* described him, is carried out with earnest fervour. It is linked with the idea that the Soviet Union's enemies are trying to sap her strength by making use of what are described as the "weaker elements" in Soviet society. "The importance of Communist education" wrote a contributor to *Red Star* in the summer of 1947, "is dictated by the fact that our country is in a situation of capitalist encirclement and that the bourgeois states are constantly trying to exercise ideological influence on Soviet people by all means. They are trying to influence the unstable elements in our society. For this reason one of the most important tasks of the Communist education of the workers is further propaganda of the ideas of Soviet patriotism and the education of our people in a spirit of Soviet pride."—"Everything that is old and outmoded in our country finds support from reactionary forces abroad" another publicist contended. These forces seek in every way to extend the influence of bourgeois ideology to Soviet people, to animate the remnants of the old in the consciousness of people, especially to animate among part of our intelligentsia

the harmful survival of old Russia that consists in servility and fawning before everything foreign."

There is much that is puzzling in the official Soviet view of the times as a period during which reactionary forces are trying to attack Russia with ideological weapons of intervention. Contrary to so much expectation events have shown that the Soviet regime has nothing to fear from the effect of going abroad on the minds of its soldiers. It is difficult to believe that the Communist Party takes very seriously the danger of its position being shaken by British or American radio propaganda or by the limited circulation of uncensored Russian-language papers by the British and U.S. Embassies in Moscow. What then have the authorities in mind when they refer to the influence of bourgeois ideology on their people ?

Perhaps the most reasonable explanation is that they find it the most effective way of inspiring them to greater efforts. Give a Russian the belief that he can do something and he is half way to accomplishment. A great deal of trouble has been taken to convince him that the Soviet Union wore Germany's strength down virtually singlehanded. It remains for him to be fully confident that his country can repair the ravage of war and overtake the capitalist lands by its own unaided strength. According to the tone of Soviet domestic propaganda in the second half of 1947 he still had some way to go before he was convinced of this.

At the risk of repetitiveness, I give below a summary of the decree of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Trade Unions on the subject of Soviet Patriotism, published on the 10th September, 1947. It remains the most illuminating account of the official attitude on this question.

A certain portion of the intelligentsia, the decree ran, addressing itself by the use of this word to practically the entire professional and state employee categories of Soviet society, were characterised by an unworthy adulation and

servility to things foreign and to the " putrifying reactionary culture of the bourgeois West." This ' harmful illness ' was widespread among the least stable representatives of the intelligentsia, among whom, the degree contended, there were people capable of national self-degradation, in the loss of respect of Soviet citizenship and in the worship of bourgeois culture which was in a state of moral decay.

These unpatriotic inclinations were explained by the fact that a certain portion of the intelligentsia was still in the grip of survivals of Tsarist Russia, when, according to this document, the ruling classes retarded the development of Russia out of deference to foreign interests. Servility, it stated, was also caused by the agents of imperialism who were seeking in every way to support and revive harmful survivals of capitalism.

After alleging that trade union organisations including clubs had been lax in their duties by standing aside from political work and insufficiently popularising the achievements of Soviet technology and Socialist production, the Presidium decreed a number of measures designed " to inculcate a feeling of pride in the great achievements of socialism, to explain the superiority of the Soviet system over the capitalist system, to wage an irreconcilable struggle against all forms of unpatriotic acts, against the influences of reactionary decadent bourgeois culture and ideology."

These measures included the organisation of lectures on the contribution of the Soviet people to world culture and on the decay of contemporary bourgeois culture. Particular attention was to be paid to workers in the fields of art and medicine where, apparently signs of servility to the West had been most widely detected.

The main content of this work, the decree concluded, was to be the education of a deep feeling of honour and self-respect in the Soviet citizen, consolidating the consciousness of the superiority of Soviet society over capitalist, of the

Soviet man over the people in bourgeois society.

This decree was the first occasion since the war of an official reprimand of a section of Soviet society for an alleged ideological deviation. The angry, exasperated terms in which some of its attacks on the " grovellers " were couched reintroduced a sharpness into Soviet polemics that had been absent for almost a decade. Here again one may detect the working of the restless, impatient, zealous spirit of post-war Communism ; here again expression was found for the disappointment of its vehement and irritable disciples that the Russia that had been washed in the three lyes still remained blemished. Crudely phrased, absurdly over-simplified, the accusations of " national self-degradation " that multiplied themselves during the winter of 1947 nevertheless sprang from one of those vast ideas that have haunted Russian minds for centuries. Men who had learned in the storm of war how prodigiously rich and at the same time how abysmally poor was their land, so robust and yet so feeble, so free on its new unexplored road yet so heavily enchained by its strange and fearful past, were once again questing the righteous life, with the intolerance, the ebullience, the fury of crusaders.

The violent tone in which they conduct their polemics, fully in the Soviet tradition, has been carried over into the field of foreign affairs. To the Soviet reader the terms of abuse in which the Moscow press refers to foreign politicians who are in disfavour do not appear inappropriate. Taken out of their context and broadcast to the world by Moscow radio, they may easily attract more attention than they deserve from listeners who are not in a position to make allowances for the atmosphere in which they were written. The Soviet Union is a country where failure is described as disaster and success as triumph, where an opponent is an enemy, and a friend a comrade. There is no tradition of " parliamentary language " ; the source of

most of the terms used in political controversy being the arena where fifteen to thirty years ago the struggle for power went on with " nothing barred." It needs only a glance at the political cartoons that used to hang in London's Holland's Exhibition Rooms, or at the writings of the " Anti-Jacobin " to discover a similar violence in English polemic at a period when that land felt its foundations threatened by events beyond its frontiers. The Russians are an articulate people and if something is said abroad which seems to them unfair, they will reply in the only language they are accustomed to using.

Attacks on servility towards the West as something incompatible with the dignity of the Soviet person and with Soviet pride continued through the winter of 1947-48. The roots of the sickness were seen as going back into the distant past. " The ruling classes in Tsarist Russia " wrote *Pravda*, " with no conception of national pride, forgetting even their native tongue, cringed before everything that came from abroad." The causes of this phenomenon were attributed to Russia's backwardness, providing conditions for the spread of admiration of Western culture. " But the situation has now changed radically. Every possibility now exists for the complete liquidation of servile admiration of the West." The ruling classes of Tsarist Russia, the argument ran, created the idea of the " inferiority " of the Russian intelligentsia. At the beginning of the 18th century Russia had been inundated with foreigners who behaved as if they represented a superior race. Everything French and later German was copied, and this had done infinite harm to Russian culture. Russian scientists had been plagiarised by foreigners. A discovery of Lomonosov had been wrongly ascribed to Lavoisier, the invention of the radio by Popov was ascribed to Marconi, and Yablochkov had not received credit for his invention of the electric lamp.

Measures were taken to see that the schools and univer-

sities gave suitable prominence to Russian achievements. *Pravda* protested in a leading article against the 'tendency to belittle Russian scholarship both at home and abroad, recalling the anti-Slav theories of the school of historians who attribute the civilisation of the Kievian Rus to Scandinavian influences brought by the Vikings, the outlook of Peter the Great who distrusted Russian discoveries, and the fostering of the Russian sense of inferiority by foreign capitalists." At the opening of the 1948 academic year, the rector of Moscow University announced that academic programmes had been revised but that some students were still not gaining the essential knowledge of the part of Russian scientists in the development of world science.

Meanwhile in the literary camp Soviet writers were working hard to create the new "hero of our times." The whole dispute with "Western bourgeois values" was placed on a moral philosophical plane. Addressing a meeting of young writers, Alexander Fadeyev, the new secretary-general of the Union of Soviet Writers, described the basic task of contemporary literature as "to show Soviet man as the bearer of the new human morality, to show him in development, distinguishing his progressive qualities and, in so doing, helping people to free themselves from the burden of the past and to move forward." By creating a positive hero, Soviet literature was looking into the future and showing the features of tomorrow. In an essay on "The Soviet Individual" Fadeyev defined the task of Soviet realism as depicting the individual both as he is and as he should be. "The apple in its natural state is a rather bitter forest fruit" he wrote, "while the apple grown in the garden of Michurin represents the essential apple to a much greater degree than the wild forest fruit." For those writers who preferred to remain wild in the forest, yielding their fruit to the few who knew the devious paths through the undergrowth to the groves where they hid, Fadeyev

had no patience. The poet Pasternak was accused of being unable and unwilling to overcome his "alien world-outlook."

The view of contemporary Western European literature that was most widely current in Soviet literary circles at this time was that it flowed in two main channels, one a depiction of man as a degraded animal, the other an escape into mysticism, subjectivity and eroticism under a religious cloak. The critic A. Leites, who was much in vogue in this period, described the Existentionalist School as a reactionary campaign to darken and confuse the minds of the masses. It was enough, he wrote, to glance at the catalogue of new books published in the West recently to sense the atmosphere of gloom they emitted. "Waves of darkness are flowing over bourgeois literature. In this artificially created obscurity the reader is not permitted to sense the difference between heroes striving for a righteous cause and the mercenaries of hangmen. Like daring gamblers the authors are speculating on the misfortunes suffered by mankind during the war and are attempting to rival one another in achieving new records of hopelessness and cynicism. All these writers are imbued with a frank unwillingness to see anything cheerful in mankind or in the world. If they pay any heed to the Second World War it is only to detect the motives of grief, loneliness and limitless desolation. But the experiences of the war have disclosed the true heroism of those who retained an inexhaustible courage and a faith in the future, even when faced with death and torture. Contemporary bourgeois literature prefers to disseminate distrust and pessimism between young people, a sense of submission and hopelessness."

Soviet writers were aware of the views of Western critics that the moralising note in contemporary Russian writing was not conducive to the production of literature, and they hastened to reply. "The best artistic achievements have

always been fundamentally instructive and moral " wrote V. Nikolayev in *Izvestiya*. " Diderot and Dickens, Ibsen and Rolland taught mankind what is humane and good. Soviet literature teaches that there can be and are new forms of life, that a man can continuously improve himself, create and turn life into something heroic. It is full of health, confidence and optimism."

" Our Western critics tell us that our path is not the path of art, but the path of propaganda " wrote Alexander Fadeyev. " We reply that they are backward provincials. It is we who are following the great traditions not only of our own but of their fathers and grandfathers. In contemporary Western European literature there is no positive hero."

In the summer of 1947, just one year after Zhdanov's Leningrad address, the Union of Soviet Writers reviewed their work. The following summary of the report of its Secretary-General is an illuminating exposition of the main trends of thought in post-war Soviet literature.

" Shall we wait " Fadeyev asked, " until the Five-Year Plan is completed before portraying it ? The central theme of the moment is that of Soviet patriotism. We must show what we represent in contrast to capitalist society. Soviet patriotism has a dangerous opponent—the survivals and prejudices of bourgeois nationalism. There is a positive principle in portraying the past since people want to understand their history but there is also a ' departure ' into the past where nationalistic influences, prejudices and survivals are not thoroughly unmasked. There are books in the Azerbaijan and Kazakh language which idealise the past and portray feudal chiefs as heroes. There are some who forget that there are two Russias, Tsarist Russia and the Russia of the Decembrists, of Belinski, of the Revolutionary Democrats, of the People's Will, of the Marxists and the Leninists, the Russia of Pushkin, Tolstoy, Chekhov and

Gorky. We shall not allow of idealising colonial Russia, but we want to show the historic necessity and progressive nature of the entry into the Russian state of a large number of peoples who could set upon the great road thanks to the existence of progressive revolutionary-democratic Russia, the Mother of a great culture, the Russia of the Bolsheviks. . .

" Zoshchenko and Akhmatova are two examples of a phenomenon that is alien to us. Their writings are a reflection on our souls of the process that in the West has reached its logical conclusion. The ideological teachers of Western European decadence are the epigones of subjective idealism—Nietzsche, Bergson, Freud. They proclaim —Down with Reason. Long Live the subconscious, animal instincts, zoological individualism, mysticism, eroticism. This ideological degeneration is accompanied by an inevitable deterioration of literary form, vide Proust, Joyce, Dos Passos, Celine, J. P. Sartre. . . . Balzac is great because he formulated a synthesis of realistic and romantic principles. He gave a social and economic cross-section of his society. Flaubert lost the moral ideal so that all his work became immoral, nakedly sceptical, completely without faith in man and in the possibility of transforming society on a principle of justice. He spurned the revolution of 1848. Hugo is the bearer of ideals without historic content, and his historic backgrounds are figments. In the French Decadents crawling immoral naturalism joins with a portrayal of the baser side of human existence, of the filthiest physiological performances of man and with individualistic symbolism with its eroticism and mysticism : . . . Dickens is a realist and at the same time a romantic, since he believes in justice and in good and in the possibility of their triumph. Dickens saw the common man as the bearer of high moral principles.

" The Russian writers saw and felt that life was not standing still and each one in his way sought to personify

his ideals in positive examples along with a merciless criticism of the existing system. What a turning point was the portrayal by Turgeniev in *Sportsman's Sketches* of our Russian peasant as a notable and peculiar character? Tolstoy gave us a whole gallery of positive characters starting from *War and Peace*. Nekrasov sang of the Muzhik from the point of view of the Muzhik. Russian realism is the most ideological, political and tendentious and for that reason the most free, vital, rich and unexpected in form."

Content and not form is the aspect of art on which Soviet attention was fixed. The President of the All-Union Academy of Fine Arts, Alexander Gerasimov defined the duty of painters as the representation of the events of the War, the perpetuation of the great achievements of contemporary Soviet personalities. "Soviet artists serve as the mouthpiece of the policy of the Party," he declared in the columns of *Pravda*. He was at that time working on a portrait of Stalin and Molotov and on a series of landscapes showing the progress of the 1947 harvest. Writing about progress in the theatre a *Trud* contributor declared that the Soviet worker needed plays about the great feats of the Soviet people in the War and about the labour heroism of Stakhanovites. Even the circus came under criticism. "The classics have triumphed" wrote David Zaslavski "but a new content has flowed into the best circus tradition. The devices are old and tried but the man is new! The new Soviet style lies in culture, nobility, moral purity and truthfulness. Soviet circus art lies in the elimination of all that is false, ugly, that distorts a healthy and beautiful life. The Soviet circus is cultured, herein lies its main distinction from the bourgeois circus. The only field in which our circus has not found itself is buffoonery. The Soviet circus must move ahead." The honour of Soviet clowning was retrieved a few months later by its leading exponent Karan d'Ache whose satirical portrayal of a British

Military Attache won a mention in *Pravda*.

These indications of changes on the ideological front—which stretches in Russia from the Politbureau to the Annual Christmas Party for Moscow children—were symptoms of a shift of opinion in the inner circles of the Communist Party that had begun in 1944 with a decision of the Central Committee concerning the third volume of Georgi Aleksandrov's History of Philosophy, the gist of which was to expose the error that lay in evading the contradictory nature of proletarian and bourgeois points of view. From this time onwards Communist publications began to take a more clearly defined attitude towards the ideology of the capitalist world and at the same time to remind their readers that not even the tremendous experiences of the war had shaken Communist faith in the correctness of the path they were taking and would continue to take undeviatingly after the war. As early as October 1944 a critic, Solodovnikov, of whom more was to be heard in the affairs of art, had published in *Bolshevik* an article on the arts as the handmaidens of politics. Within three months of the end of the war the same journal published an article complaining of an inadequate and frequently tendentious treatment of Russia in English school books, one of the earliest signs of the post-war Soviet sensitiveness to anything that appeared to be a deliberate attempt to ignore their role in world affairs or to doubt their good intentions.

These early hints of the trend of events, passed to the rank-and-file members of the Communist Party for their ideological guidance, can now be linked to the chain of measures undertaken by the Central Committee to strengthen its supremacy over Russian thought and check any dangerous drift away from orthodoxy in the post-war period. In turn literature, the stage, the cinema, the press, even the music hall were called to order and their *bezideynost* (lack of ideological content) corrected. Lady Hamilton, enjoyed,

it was said, in the highest circles, disappeared from the Soviet screen in a flutter of tulle. Sonja Henje glided out of sight. Instead Russian cinema audiences watched the Czech film "Men without Wings," and those classics of the French and Italian resistance movements "La Bataille du Rail" and "Open City." Migrants from the bourgeois music hall like "Tipperary" and "K-K-K-Katie" none the less popular for having been thirty years on the way, disappeared from the repertory of the Red Army Choir. Somerset Maugham went back onto the black list, with a reminder to the public that he was a former British agent.

The tendencies at work are well illustrated by a comparison of the repertories of the principal twelve Moscow dramatic theatres in May 1946 and one year later. In 1946 some 70 different plays were being presented in these theatres, 21 of them were foreign classics including 4 plays of Shakespeare, 2 adaptations from Dickens, and plays by Ibsen, Beaumarchais, Rostand, Wilde, Sheridan and Shaw; 12 were Russian classics, principally Chekhov, Gorky and Ostrovsky; the 34 contemporary Soviet plays were mostly war adventure plays or light comedies on the post-war situation. Two plays by Lillian Hellman and one by J. B. Priestley were being given.

A year later the position was practically unchanged as concerns the classics, both Russian and foreign, while an American play on racial problems had been added to the category of contemporary foreign works. The increase in the repertory from 70 to 90 was made up entirely by new Soviet plays of which the titles alone indicate the tendency. "The Russian Question," "The Young Guards," "The Victors," "The General," "The Walls of Leningrad," "Truth," "Faith," these are the newcomers. Among plays that were dropped were "Meeting in the Dark," "School Friends," "The Birthday" and "The Night of Errors." The trend was maintained in the 1948 season.

The public which is consulted through meetings called periodically by various newspapers to secure an airing of views, continued to express its dissatisfaction that the subject which interested it most, the struggle of the working-class with the problems of the day, was being neglected by playwrights. A meeting called by *Trud* during the 1947-48 season produced many complaints to this effect.

The Party's ideological campaign was suitably rounded off with a review of the work of the nation's philosophers and musicians. For nine days in June, 1947, eighty four Soviet philosophers conferred. Forty eight of them spoke in debate. There was no time for the speeches of the other thirty eight but they had the satisfaction of seeing their papers republished in a new journal, *Questions of Philosophy*, launched at the conference.

The conference took a characteristically Marxist form. The subject for discussion was a History of Western European Philosophy written by Georgi Aleksandrov, chief of the agitation and propaganda division of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, under whose auspices the conference was held. This book was subjected to sharp criticism out of which a number of positive points emerged and were subsequently fused into decisions in which all, including Aleksandrov, concurred.

In his authoritative contribution to the discussions Andrei Zhdanov laid down that the Marxist historian of philosophy should show how as a result of the appearance of the proletariat a new proletarian world view, different in principle from bourgeois philosophy, had arisen. The exposition of the history of philosophy should be creative, associated with the tasks of the times.

In as much as materialism grew up and developed in the struggle against idealistic tendencies, Zhdanov contended, the history of philosophy was also the history of the struggle between materialism and idealism. The rise of Marxism

was a true discovery, a revolution in philosophy. Before Marx, philosophy had been a matter for individuals who did not express the fundamental interests of the masses. Marxism had become the " symbol of faith " of the people. It armed the working-class with a genuine scientific philosophy of the understanding of the world and its revolutionary transformation.

Zhdanov spoke in terms with which Russia was already familiar when he criticised Aleksandrov for maintaining silence about Russian philosophy thus artificially dividing the history of philosophy and perpetuating the " bourgeois " division into " Western " and " Eastern " culture ; when he reminded his audience that Marxism had arisen in a merciless struggle against all representatives of idealism, and warned that objectivism would lead to slavishness before bourgeois philosophers and an exaggeration of their services " depriving our philosophy of its militant progressive spirit." The principle thesis of materialism, he insisted, demanded irreconcilable struggle against all opponents. Finally, revealing that Stalin's intervention had led to the calling of the conference, Zhdanov told the philosophers that the " sharp turn " on the ideological front taken by the Central Committee concerned them. " The philosophers have lagged behind the demands of the Party," he declared, calling for a response to Stalin's statement that the new themes posed by Socialist construction must be elaborated in a militant spirit.

Taken in its setting among other measures applied to the arts, the Central Committee's decree on music, published early in 1948, seems less surprising than the fact that for so long there had flourished a school of composition far and away beyond the comprehension of the average Soviet radio listener. And when it came, the justification for a more popular style, given by Tikhon Khrennikov, the new secretary of the Society of Composers, was practically a

repetition in musical terms of the argument the writer Alexander Fadeyev had used 18 months before in connection with literature. Similar, too, were the charges that coteries had been formed, that critics and composers had set up mutual admiration societies and that in Moscow music was being performed that bewildered and depressed the ordinary middlebrow citizen. The press took the familiar line of accusing musicians, especially students in the Conservatories, of neglecting ideology as previously it had attacked the " objective " philosophers and the apolitical writers and students of Western literature. " No attention has been paid to the ideological education of young composers in Leningrad Conservatory. . . . " *Komsomolskaya Pravda* commented, " Professors and teachers of the Marxism-Leninism faculty never talked to their pupils about the themes of their works or about ideological trends in their compositions. . . . The basic reorganization of the work in the Conservatory demands a higher level of Komsomol work. Young musicians must clearly understand what the Party demands from them." More music for choirs and for national instruments was asked for, subject-music easier both to perform and to understand. Too much abstract instrumental music had been commissioned by the department of music in the Committee of Arts, the highest state organ in the country as concerns music. In 1947, it was pointed out in the press, the selection of 8 symphonies, 7 sonatas, 4 string quartets and 12 overtures for publication heavily overbalanced the attention paid to choral music. Of 266 works produced in 1947 only 7, the complaint continued, could be called subject-music, and of 36 symphonic works produced by Soviet composers that year only 6 were ever performed in open concerts in Moscow. Most of this music had been too difficult for performance outside Leningrad and Moscow, Prokofiev's Ode to the End of the War being scored for 16 double

basses, 8 harps, and four pianos, and Khachatourian's Symphonic Piece requiring a complement of 24 trombones.

To justify the Party's new measures, figures were published to indicate how public taste had already rejected most of the extravagances of which the authorities were complaining. While concerts where Beethoven, Bach, Berlioz and Rachmaninov were performed were always "sold out," the concert halls were rarely more than quarter full when new works by Prokofiev, Shebalin or Popov were performed. The public's taste should be respected, the Party-controlled press urged, and there should be more Grieg, more Schubert and Mozart and Wagner played, and more of the Russian classics like Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov. The great orchestras of Moscow and Leningrad should tour the country more frequently and play in the industrial areas where although adequate concert halls were available, there were rarely musicians to use them. At Krivoi Rog, for example, the theatre had been obliged to fall back on performances by gypsies, pigmies and variety artists. Towns like Astrakhan and Sumsk and large regions like South Sakhalin in the Pacific had no opportunity of hearing good music.

The publication of the Central Committee's decree was followed by a fortnight of prolonged and generally heated discussion during which it became apparent that what was at issue was not merely a question of individual mistakes but of a deep change in musical style. The ideological justification for the decree was given by Khrennikov in a widely publicised speech to Moscow composers in which he traced the formalistic tendencies in contemporary Soviet music to Stravinsky and to the Central European school of Hindemith, Krenek and Berg, which, in his opinion encouraged instrumental extravagance, eroticism and mysticism. The great musicians of the past had addressed themselves to the contemporary public as a whole, not to

cliques of connoisseurs or to the public of fifty years hence.

As far as the organisation of Soviet music was affected, the charges brought about by the decree brought a group of thoroughly orthodox academic musicians to positions of authority, replacing the more experimental "modern" group, whose members while retaining their professorships in the Conservatory and their membership of the Society of Composers, ceased, for the time being at least, to hold office in the innumerable sub-committees connected with the Committee of Arts. The main effect of the reorganisation is likely to be felt in the sphere of teaching. Concert programmes have been effected less than might have been expected. To be on the safe side organisers of chamber music concerts generally introduce a vocalist into the programme; more classical music, especially German, has been heard in 1948 than at any time since before the war, while for about six weeks nothing of either Prokofiev or Khachatourian was performed publicly. But students of music who were preparing to graduate in the Spring of 1948 often had to change their concert pieces and even some of the works of Scriabin were abandoned as being too subjective. Whether, under new direction, Soviet composers will produce music that the broad mass of the public likes and that the government considers worthy of the times, remains to be seen.

How is this liveliness on the ideological front impinging on the mind of the ordinary Soviet citizen? An account has been given of the various directives issued by the Party to defend its doctrine, and we have seen with what zeal the writers, publicists, educationists and others responded. It has been suggested that what Zhdanov described as the "sharp turn" on the ideological front met the desires of the most articulate elements in what passes for public opinion, the voice of the Party calling, for a bolder, more

inspiring and more truculent message with which they could address themselves to the masses during the onerous perplexing days of the Five Year Plan of Reconstruction. What are the forms the new drive is taking ?

The arts are relied on to inspire the Soviet mind. Through educational channels it is being reshaped. Party and near-Party organisations are forcing it along certain lines of thought. Political agitation has little or no place in the process. The Soviet people look on oratory with suspicion and resent anything that seems to exclude simple people from rational activities. The political meetings that have preceded post-war electoral campaigns have been marked by the absence of demagogy. They are held in the atmosphere of the lecture room where a lesson in civics is in progress.

There is no need to dwell any longer on the role of literature and the arts. A glance at the effect of the " sharp turn " on education is, however, relevant to our purpose. Typical of the new conditions was the criticism *Pravda* printed in August, 1947 of a book issued by the State Publishing House of Children's Literature entitled " How man became a giant," which had been written with the intention of showing " how man appeared on the earth, how he learned to work and think, how he learned the use of iron and fire, how he struggled for mastery over nature and how he got to know the world to re-organise it." When published in 1946, this book was well received by the critics and given a place of honour in the annual exhibition of children's books. In the following year, however, the *Pravda* critic found in it a number of " very real defects " to hinder seriously the achievement of the aim the authors had set themselves—that of giving young readers a true world outlook. Faithfully echoing the words of Comrade Zhdanov the reviewer dealt especially with the writers' treatment of Socrates and Plato, criticising them for holding them up as

models worthy of study and imitation, although, he contended, Socrates was the preacher of religious mystical views of the world, sharply hostile to materialism, and Plato's philosophy had definite class roots and was an expression of the interests of social forces which aimed to overthrow Athenian democracy. In writing of these philosophers, the critic asserted, the authors should have shown how at the very beginning of philosophical thought, two irreconcilible schools of philosophy were set up—materialism and idealism, whose struggle had not ceased throughout the whole course of human society and was still going on today.

It was no surprise to learn during the winter of 1947 that the ideological changes were effecting the Party's attitude towards religious practice. Ever since a mild rebuke by Stalin to its Central Committee administered in the middle 30's, the Komsomol had avoided disciplinary measures against any of its members who attended church, and in 1946 the movement's monthly magazine *Young Bolshevik* announced that there was no departure from this line. A local branch had written to the editor for guidance in the case of two members who, when forbidden to attend church services, appealed to their rights under the constitution. In its reply *Young Bolshevik* dismissed this appeal by pointing out that the Constitution while defining the citizens' rights vis-à-vis the State could obviously not be held relevant to relations between the individual and a non-state organisation like the Komsomol or the Communist Party. But it condemned the local branch for taking administrative action against the two erring members. This, it argued would only encourage them to continue their religious observances in secret. " If there are Komsomols in an organisation who believe in God " it wrote, " they should be carefully shown the harm of their religious prejudices, they should be helped to adopt a correct view of natural phenomena." There the matter rested until October, 1947.

Following the conference of philosophers, however, there occurred a radical departure from this "liberal" attitude towards religion. This is not to assert that the Party used its influence to place any further material obstacles in the way of the religious communities. The relations between Church and State remained unchanged, the former drawing its adherents mainly from those sections of the public where the desire to take an active part in public life was faint, from those people who had been "passed by" or who had never been other than indifferent to Marxism. Though the effect of the new line was not to put back into currency the harsh, uncompromising slogan that those who were not for Communism must be considered against it, it served as a reminder to all that adherence to Communism was quite incompatible with religious observance.

The "correction" of the 1946 decision of *Young Bolshevik* took the form of a new directive condemning the magazine's attitude towards religion as "confused, politically and theoretically illiterate, and harmful to the Communist education of youth." Commenting on it, the daily organ of the Komsomol wrote that the chief error of *Young Bolshevik* was its attempt to prove the possibility of reconciling materialism with religion and idealism, an attitude that it described as essentially a departure from Marxism. It went on to quote Stalin as follows: "The Party cannot be neutral regarding religion and it conducts anti-religious propaganda against all religious prejudices because it stands for science and religious prejudices are opposed to science since any religion is contrary to science... There are cases in which some of the members of the Party occasionally hinder the thorough development of anti-religious propaganda. If such members of the Party are expelled it is very good, since there is no room in the ranks of our Party for such "communists." "

Now, though the Komsomol is not the Communist Party,

it is affiliated to it and one of its duties is to help the Communist Party to educate youth in a spirit of communism. Its charter demands that the Komsomol conduct anti-religious propaganda and in principle no young man or woman can be a Komsomol unless he is free from religious convictions. In practice it appears that a good deal of tolerance had been exercised in this respect during and immediately after the war. A stop was put to this at the end of 1947 and it is safe to assume that for some time at least, the irreconcilability of religious convictions with membership of the Komsomol will continue to be stressed.

We have examined some of the ways in which official doctrine impinges on the mind of Soviet Russia today, a country at grips with the problem of freeing its people from want. Some of the measures that are being taken in the ideological field are clearly and closely connected with the immediate needs of rallying the public to work in a spirit of unquestioning loyalty to the regime. As the Soviet Union extricates itself from the difficulties with which it is faced in the post-war period, one may expect some modification in these measures. For example, since the end of the war which meant the release from the army of two or three million Communists who had no experience of Party work in peacetime conditions a most determined campaign of political education has been in progress, inevitably affecting more than Communists and Komsomols. As the anniversaries of significant events in the preparation of the October Revolution occur, as new volumes in the 500,000 edition of the collected works of Stalin appear, column after column of theoretical material in the Soviet press spreads the doctrine among men and women who were called on to add disciplined thought to that disciplined action which had qualified them for Party membership in war conditions. A more measured pace is likely to be taken by the Communist educators as the cadres gain in experience. But there are other forces

at work on the Soviet mind that are of more permanent validity. Among them literature is probably the most influential. If we therefore take a look at what the Russians have been reading during the past twenty or thirty years we shall have a useful guide to the values that have been planted in their minds.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the data that is obtainable on book-publishing in Moscow is the loyalty to the classics that is revealed. There has been surprisingly little change in the relative popularity of writers of established reputation, both Russian and foreign, although the reading public has been vastly extended. The Russian classics far out-number contemporary Soviet literature in the totals given for books published since the Revolution, and foreign classics are scarcely less popular than the works written in the Soviet Union since 1917. To judge from the number of copies of their works printed, Pushkin and Leo Tolstoy were the most widely read Russian authors during the thirty years that preceded the Revolution. First place in the list of authors published during the thirty years after the Revolution goes to Maxim Gorky, but Pushkin and Tolstoy follow closely with Turgeniev and Lermontov holding the same relative positions as before. The most striking gain is that made by Anton Chekhov. 672,000 copies of his works were printed before 1917, over 18 million since. Gogol is shown to have receded slightly in relation to other classics and Dostoievsky substantially. The seven Soviet writers (excluding Gorky who may be considered as now among the classics) whose works have been most numerously distributed are Sholokhov, Alexei Tolstoy, Konstantin Simonov, Katayev, Serafimovich, Novikov-Priboi and Ilya Ehrenburg. Seventy million copies of their books have been sold since 1917, compared with over 157 million by the above-listed classical writers. In the Soviet period the seven most favoured foreign writers are, in order of popularity, Victor

Hugo, Maupassant, Zola, Dickens, Romain Rolland, Balzac and Henri Barbusse. In the thirty years before the Revolution the list ran : Maupassant, Dickens, Zola, Shakespeare, Schiller, Anatole France, Hugo. The relative popularity of Byron, Goethe and Cervantes receded somewhat though their works were far more widely read than before the Revolution ; the increase in Stendhal's popularity is shown by a rise in the number of his books printed from 27,000 before 1917 to 881,000 since. In all some 48 million books translated from the French, 67 million from the English, including American authors, and 120 million from Polish and other Slav languages have been published since 1917.

The most popular books by contemporary Soviet writers published since 1917 have been Sholokhov's *Quiet Flows the Don* with almost 6 million copies published, and his *Upturned Soil*, Alexei Tolstoy's *Peter the First* and *Bread*, Gorky's *Mother* and two books by Fadeyev *Havoc* and *The Young Guard*, the latter, perhaps, better classified with those books for youth, among which Gorky's *Childhood* and Nikolai Ostrovski's *How the Steel was Tempered* are the most widely read. Opinions vary about the place these books will ultimately hold in the history of Russian literature. Apart from their merits, however, they remain well within the Russian literary tradition and thus in the main stream of European civilisation.

The introduction of compulsory education in all parts of the Soviet Union has led to increases not only in the publication of books and the number of centres where they are printed, but also in the languages used. Leo Tolstoy's works, for example, were printed in 10 languages in editions totalling about 11 million in pre-revolutionary Russia. 65 different languages of the Soviet Union are included in the post-revolutionary total of 26½ million. Chekhov is read in 61, Pushkin in 76 languages ; in Tsarist days the number

were 5 and 15 respectively. Thirty years ago the number of books printed annually per head of population was 0.7. In 1940 it had reached 4.1. The number of languages used rose from 49 to 119. In 1913 6½ million books were printed in Russia in non-Russian languages, in 1937, 134 million.

Recovery in this field has been rapid since the war, and in 1946 the pre-war level of book-publishing had been regained. In 1947 it was substantially surpassed. The concentration on education, political and general, and the need for technical instruction that characterised the post-war years is reflected in figures that show that in the years 1946 and 1947, literature and art made up only 10% of the total number of books published, other subjects being mathematics and natural science (26.6%), medicine (23%), political, social and economic sciences (19.9%), technical and agrotechnical (16.5%), various subjects (4.0%).

Post-war trends in publishing indicate no substantial deviation from the general line followed previously, with Russian classics and foreign literature making up about two thirds of books printed in the category classified as literature. For the year 1948 they include volumes of Lermontov, Leskov, Dostoievsky, Kuprin, Serafimovich, Krylov, Diderot, Balzac, Goethe, Heine, Stendhal and Maupassant. New translations of *The Divine Comedy*, *Don Juan* and *The Odes of Horace* are listed for publication in mass editions, together with reprints of Hugo's *Notre Dame de Paris*, Dickens' *Dombey and Son*, and Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*.

A Russian child's reading begins with fairy-tales, folk-songs and fables of Krylov, extracts from national sagas and the poetry of Lermontov and Zhukovsky. Only after he has become familiar with Pushkin the writer of limpid prose and the creator of the vivid characters of the *Tales of Bielkin*, *The Queen of Spades*, and *The Captain's Daughter* is a start made on his poetry, but at the age of 14 *Onegin* is likely to

have been read for the first time, together with Lermontov's *A Hero of Our Time*, and his volume of Caucasian lyrics. Anthologies of Russian literature used in the schools contain characteristic passages from Radishchev, the great Russian eighteenth century humanist whose lines:

I am the same I was, and shall be all Life's span—
No brute, nor thing of wood, nor slave: a Man!

written on the way to exile, stand at the head of many a Russian schoolchild's diary today; from Ryleyev, hanged for his political beliefs less than a century before the Revolution; from Nekrasov, the indignant champion of the oppressed Russian serf. At an early age the young Russian learns to associate truth with the notion of struggle. At fourteen, too, there will have come awareness of the patriotic note found in the best Russian literature, and as knowledge of his country's past deepens, patriotism will be linked in the child's mind with the concept of strivings for freedom and national independence, while his teachers will constantly remind him that he, the young Soviet citizen, is the heir to that liberty of which his ancestors sang and for which so many enlightened Russians fought.

Nature and adventure stories play no less a part in the formation of his mind than in other lands, and Soviet educationists have thrown their net wide in their search for suitable literature. Stories of Russia's own celebrated and enterprising explorers, books by Defoe, Maine Reed, Korolenko, Jules Verne, Turgeniev's *Sportsman's Sketches* are widely read and when the child is in his early teens Gogol brings into the reading programme notes of feeling and fantasy which heighten the interest in nature. R. L. Stevenson, Kipling, Jerome K. Jerome and Jack London, *Gulliver's Travels* and *Don Quixote* are as well known and as beloved by Russian children as anywhere in the world, and in the child's mind their characters take their places among the heroes of Russia's past, Stenka Razin and

Pugachov, the rebels, Ivan Sussanin and Dubrovsky . . . .

It is through the medium of the works of Leo Tolstoy and Saltykov-Shchedrin that the young Russian reader first learns to feel strongly about social injustice deriving his ideas of good and evil from such sources as Tolstoy's *After the Ball*, the tale in which the author demolishes all the sympathy that the reader has grown to feel towards Varenka's colonel father by showing him callously watching the flogging of a soldier in his command. And again Soviet education emphasises that the days when such distorted characters could wield authority in the land have passed, and directs the child's attention to the heroes of the Revolution and the Civil War, Chapayev, Voroshilov, Lazo, men who represent the people of whom Radishchev had prophetically written " burdened with their heavy bonds, enraged in their despair, (they) will break, with the fetters that impede their liberty, the heads of their inhuman masters and dye their fields with their masters' blood. . . ." Nekrasov has a powerful educative effect on the young Russian's growing sense of morality and instills in him a respect for the innate talent of the Russian peasant. There is not a youngster who has not shed tears over *Russian Women* or *The Peasants*. Lermontov's *Mtsiri* awakens his romantic passion for mental freedom and physical power and through its glowing verse the child grows to believe in his own strength to remove obstacles, to fight against hardships without the aid of God and in the face of a hostile nature. Yet there is room, too, for poetry from which the didactic note is absent and the lyrics of Fet, Tyutchev and Maikov contribute to the dreams of adolescent Russia.

At fifteen or thereabouts Chernyshevsky, the imprisoned exiled radical, appears on the child's bookshelf next to Goncharov's novels and some work of Maxim Gorky. Furmanov's *Chapayev*, Nikolai Ostrovsky's *How the Steel was Tempered* are read out of school with *The Young Guard*,

Fadeyev's stirring reconstruction of the heroic exploits behind the German lines of a group of Donbass youths. This book has won such a high reputation in post-war Russia as to induce many children to lay aside *War and Peace* and *Resurrection* until vacation-time, but it is of these great classics that hundreds of thousands of Russian schoolchildren talk when they assemble for the first parties during the November holidays. Pierre Besukhov is everybody's hero and the child, writing in his diary on that solemn evening before entering the Komsomol, declares Tanya to be his symbol of devotion. It is at this age that the Soviet child is brought into direct awareness of his responsibilities as a citizen, through books by such writers as Gaidar, who was responsible for launching the *Timur* movement for self-help among children, Tvardovsky and the highly romantic Katayev and Kassil. The didactic note is struck in the stories that appear systematically in the magazines for youth, which aim at implanting interest in the various ways by which the young citizen can train himself for a life useful to the community, and become a bold and independent minded citizen. While he is taught to think of the life of the Soviet Union as a whole and to regard the problems that face the community as his own personal problems, he is made aware of the principle of racial and national tolerance which, in the long-run, may prove to be the most valuable lesson that the Soviet Union has to teach the world and which has already made Moscow a capital to which people of non-European origin everywhere look with special sympathy. And together with his expanding knowledge of the forces at work in the world, the Soviet child, again largely through the medium of literature, acquires a respect for science that he will never lose.

Loyalty to the group to which he belongs and a readiness to accept its decisions even when they go against his personal desires are learned during the course of schooling. The

child is taught to consider himself not as belonging to a school but as being one of the group to whom the school belongs, to whom it has been given to cherish. He feels at one with the interests of his classroom and if his parents' opinions clash with those of the teaching-staff the child seeks for guidance in the opinion of his class mates. Early on in his life, the young Soviet citizen learns to respect the collective will of his colleagues in work, a will that being a fusion of many wills, is on a higher plane than any individual will.

The instilling of political knowledge may be described as a process of creating conditions in which the child can make up his own mind about his place in society. Throughout the course of education he is made to study the biographies of famous historical and contemporary characters in which stress is laid on their industriousness in the pursuit of knowledge, and their use of this knowledge for the good of humanity. In the hours devoted to literature, much time is taken in encouraging the pupils, through essay-writing, to examine the attitude of authors to their heroes, and to assess the influences on authors by the social or economic conditions of their times. This work is deliberately linked with attempts to draw the child into considering his own position and the various factors in his environment that determine it. The descriptions of the situation of children in pre-revolutionary times, as provided by Tolstoy, Nekrasov, Korolenko, and Chekhov, are drawn on to convince the Soviet child that he enjoys opportunities denied to earlier generations, to the sickly inhabitants of damp cellars, the lonely day-dreaming children of the remote *taiga*, the pampered arrogant children of a doomed class and he readily assumes that in countries that have not overthrown the economic system that was responsible for these anomalies, the improvements which he enjoys in the Soviet Union are either not yet available to all, or exist only under the threat of being lost as a result of the " caprices " of capitalism.

Chapter Five

SOVIET PATRIOTISM

SOVIET Patriotism is a phrase that has occurred with increasing frequency in official parlance during the period under review in this book. It has, indeed, been described as the most characteristic feature of the contemporary Soviet man. " Soviet Patriotism " we read in *Isvestiya*, " includes all that is best and most progressive in the past of each of the nations of our land." Though it will take us far from the crowded post-war scene, a journey into Russia's past may help to an understanding of some of the characters that jostle each other there, and perhaps also of some of the lines that are being spoken so exuberantly.

Let us use our time machine to take us to the very origins of Russian history, since it is on this early period in the history of their state that much attention has been fixed lately, for reasons which we shall see later. We have time for but a glance at the panorama of modern history as it unrolls itself. Through breaks in the dark, menacing clouds that hang over 19th century Russia we catch sight of a few figures, familiar to all in the Soviet period we have left behind us—Maxim Gorky, cheerfully hammering out his model of the new, revolutionary man, Chekhov smiling gently at a group of amiable, flaccid people while he lifts his camera, Dostoievsky speaking sweet reason among a crowd of mendicants, Tolstoy advancing rigidly behind his plough. We recognise Saltykov by the indignant look with which he regards the

world about him, and Turgeniev because he has found the one sunny patch in it, a park near Kursk where the nightingales sing; Chernyshevski is out of sight, probably in exile, while Belinsky, the didactic, is ill in bed, but Herzen is there preaching disenchantment with the West and telling the Slavs that they can save the world by revolution. Vivid as a peacock the poet Lermontov stands out against the grey background. Pushkin from a little eminence around which his admirers press, points majestically to the beauty of the Russian landscape and the glory of her past and as they gaze, scales fall from people's eyes and a new vision is created. Rising gigantic from the masses, Lomonosov speaks a language, enriched and purified, whose echo reaches our ears from all corners of the land.

With gathering speed our machine carries us through the centuries. If we are sharp enough we shall notice that the urbanity of eighteenth century Petersburg only thinly masks its mercilessness and that this lovely but unloved city is built on ten thousand peasant corpses. But our eyes should be elsewhere, on Peter's shipyards at Voronezh, on the ironworks of Karelia, on Catherine's armies pushing Southward, on the Cossack settlements in Kamchatka. The view blurs as we rise to top the great barrier of Mongol occupation that divides Russian history, but as we add distance between ourselves and details, one clearly outlined pattern emerges; the growth of the Moscow principality, as a Russian government unhesitatingly advances its claims to rule over the whole of Russia. Even at this distance the two Ivans, the Third and the Fourth, stand out as great leaders and brilliant organisers. Shorn of his legends, the latter, whose majestic name of *Grozny* bears witness to the awe and respect in which he was held in his days, appears as one of Russia's greatest men.

We are heading Southward now, to the banks of the Dnieper where the Eastern Slav state originated, and it is

beside a Scythian burial mound within which the slaughtered horses stand with their golden Altaic ornaments of cruel-beaked birds with great lidless eyes, that our machine comes to rest. We are in the 6th century of our era.

For almost two centuries historians have disputed the origins of the Russian state, relying on a rich but often contradictory source-material in which poetry, saga, history and propaganda are elaborately intertwined. A particularly sharp edge has been given to their arguments by the fact that what is at stake is whether the Eastern Slavs made their own history or had their history shaped for them by outside forces. German historians, it need hardly be said, have tended to adopt the latter view, and it has fitted in conveniently with the Germanic theory that the Slavs are an inferior people, unworthy and indeed incapable of full nationhood.

A clearer picture of Russia in the earliest period has however, become visible since the archaeologists have added their *trouvailles* to the available written evidence which has also been enriched by material from Oriental records. At the same time, research into the Scandinavian sources of the material on which the so-called " Normanist " school based their theories, has tended to diminish the importance of the role played by the Varangian, or Viking, princes in early Russian history. Finally, there has been some penetrating investigation by historians of the effect of political or personal bias on various accounts of the origins of the Slav state. As a result, Soviet historians have recently been able to bring forward arguments of considerable weight in support of views that are especially acceptable in this present patriotic period.

Rightly or wrongly, the reading of early Russian history that is being provided to the public at large is that Eastern Slav civilisation began in the 6th century of our era. How far it was ethnically connected with the Scythian ploughmen

whose supremacy in the Dnieper valley and on the Black Sea littoral preceded this Slav civilisation, is still a matter of conjecture, but some Soviet students of history are working on the theory that at least in agricultural practice there was continuity between Scythian and Slav. Still obscure, too, is the connection between the inhabitants of the Dnieper area with the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire, though the discovery of large numbers of Roman coins of the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. seems to indicate that it was important. Less concrete is the evidence in support of the legend that St. Andrew the Apostle, who, according to Eucherius of Lyons, " soothed the Scythians with his sermons," laid the foundations of Kiev. One cannot safely go beyond the assumption that at a time when the ancient slave-culture world was collapsing, the Eastern Slavs took a part in the creation of a new world that was no less significant than the contribution of the Czecho-Moravians, the Slovaks, the Thessalonian Slavs and the Slovenes, and that this new state of the Dnieper valley soon had relations with the two principle sources of culture in those days, the Arab world and Byzantium.

To a people which has always read the history of its land with excitement and interest, this new light on the past has been particularly illuminating. Working like a cankerworm at the heart of national self-respect the notion that Russian history began with the arrival of a foreign ruler had long weakened popular respect for the State and caused Russian patriotism to take the form of devotion to the community rather than to the state, an attitude which cannot meet with the approval of those who rule Russia today and who consider that it is the function of history to point a moral. Official approval of any historical discovery that points to the self-reliance of the early Slav state is therefore guaranteed. No less welcome are indications that in these distant times the cultural and economic links

between Eastern Slavdom and the rest of the civilized world were strong and numerous. The Soviet people strongly resent any insinuations that their ancestors were an uncouth and backward people in relation to the rest of Europe, and in this the objective facts of history are on their side.

In the 8th century there were already numerous Eastern Slav cities-in-the-making and some of these were in direct contact with Byzantium and the East. Archaeological studies reveal an unbroken process of development of a society in the region around the Dnieper from the time of the Scythians to the founding of the Kiev State. There is evidence, too, that during this intermediate period the level of culture was relatively high, that hand-crafts were well-developed, and that Christianity had made some headway among the common people before the official baptism of the Kiev State long afterwards. Certainly the rapidity with which the Kiev Rus was able to provide masons, painters and other craftsmen for the erection of its impressive monuments, and the skill with which its people adopted Byzantine fighting methods after meeting them on the battlefield, point to the existence of an alert and clever people before the 10th century.

But perhaps the most telling indication that the Dnieper culture had already deep roots before the arrival of the Scandinavians was the swiftness with which these intruders, and the Greeks who joined them after Vladimir's conversion at the end of the 10th century, became assimilated into the Slav ways of life, and were opposed by stubborn patriots, often backed by popular opinion, if they sought to impose a foreign hegemony. The Russian struggle to be culturally independent and the resentment of any implication that they were inferior to the foreigners in their midst, were no less characteristic of the 11th century than they are in our times. How familiar is that note struck by Father Feodosy, a monk of the Monastery of the Caves in Kiev, in his message

to Izyaslav, Prince of Kiev! "It is not fitting, son, to praise an alien faith," he wrote, "for he who praiseth an alien faith defameth his own faith."

"Thou, son, be on thy guard against them and praise thine own faith incessantly, do not become intimate with them, but avoid them and by good deeds follow the precepts of thine own faith. . . .

"Guard thy daughters, do not marry them off to them, and take no wives from among them."

The historical parallel seems all the closer when one reads that this assumption of superiority provoked the Greeks and others into a violent anti-Russian campaign of slander and calumny ranging from attacks on the morals of the ruling prince to the spreading of theories about the "inferiority" of the Slavs. And in turn, the Russians retorted with the claim that their people had rendered the greatest services for the triumph of Christianity, and provided the Greeks of Saint Sophia with the spectacle of a tremendous outburst of popular patriotism in the form of demonstrations and parades in favour of their local saints.

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As first seen from across the Dnieper, Kiev confronts the traveller with a panorama of churches, monasteries and convents placed irregularly along the sandstone hills which bar the river's flow and cause it to wheel towards the grass-steppe. In these modest hills, nowhere rising more than 300 feet, occurred some of the earliest recorded events in Slav history, for Kiev is probably one of the most ancient sites in Europe. When Scandinavian power was established over the flourishing Slavonic settlement which had grown up near the easy ferry across the Dnieper, the Norsemen built a stone castle in the hills, enclosing a place of sanctuary

widely known through heathen Europe. From the middle of the ninth century until Russia's greatest catastrophe, the Mongol invasion of the 13th century, the history of the Eastern Slav world centred on these heights, revealed for a few moments as the train slowly crosses the temporary wooden bridge the Red Army's sappers built after the liberation of Kiev. In the foreground the Vydubitsky Monastery lies snugly beside the water which reflects its yellow high-shouldered towers. Above it is the blunt tower of the Nunnery of the Holy Trinity, still occupied by sisters of mercy. As the train advances, a chestnut grove glides aside revealing a breath-taking view of the Lavra, a complex of ecclesiastical buildings nestling in a dip in the hills, dominated by a three-hundred foot belfry-tower incongruously isolated since the destruction by the Germans of the 11th Century Uspensky Church that used to raise its golden spires beside it. This first oblique view disclosing the Church of the Raising of the Cross which gives entrance to the Monastery of the Caves, and the small Church of Salvation in the Birch-Grove kindles the imagination to raise visions of the Russia of fairy-tale and folk-song.

Much of Russia's history is associated with these hills. Here the people placed their local river-gods until the princes came and made their god the state god and built a pantheon on the hills for the gods of the nations that formed a part of the Kiev State. Here Oleg, who was perhaps Orvar-Oddr, the hero of Norse saga, won Kiev for Igor the son of Rurik and knit together a Russian state, of which the foundation had long been laid, making subject to his authority the princes of Novgorod, Polotsk, Pereyaslavl, Rostov and Chernigov. From here he set out to raid Constantinople. Here, too, according to the earliest Russian chronicle whose author lies mummified in the Monastery of the Caves, Oleg succumbed to the bite of a serpent that crawled from the skull of a horse's skeleton, as the magicians

had prophesied. It was at the foot of these hills already sheltering a flourishing Slav settlement that the Viking trader-warriors beached their ships as they travelled the water-ways between the Baltic and the Black Sea, and, tempted to stay, settled behind stockades to receive merchants from the Khazars and the Greeks. For a while they retained their Scandinavian customs. Olga, the wife of Oleg's successor, Igo, avenged the murder of her husband by making a delegation of Drevlians the victims of a grand scale ship-burial in these hills. They were carried into the courtyard of her stone palace in their boat " seated on the cross benches in flowing robes, puffed up with pride " and buried alive according to Swedish ritual. But gradually the harsh Norse customs perished in this southern Slavonic world. Olga turned to the Christianity with which this region had long been familiar. Her son bore a name of purely Slav derivation, Svyatoslav. The struggle of the native Slavonic forces to assert themselves over Norse power resolved itself in a coup d'êtat which brought to power Vladimir, a ruler of wholly Slav sympathies welcomed by the citizens of Kiev as being more likely to fulfill the function for which, according to its elders, this city-state nurtured its princes—" to look after the welfare of the Russian land and to fight the pagans."

From these hills there grew a real unity of the Russian lands. Trade was energetically developed along the great water-ways of the Eurasian plain. Foreign influences, Persian, Arab, Greek, Khazar penetrated the Kiev State, and were rapidly assimilated. The Russian people were united in a state whose level of culture evoked admiration from many visitors from mediaeval Europe, for Kiev at the beginning of the 11th century had become a metropolis through which trade flowed between Central Europe and the Muslim world. Across Volhynia and Galicia roads from Kiev ran to the trans-Carpathian trade routes. The city

was famed for its artisans, for the craft of its Armenian, Jewish, Arab and Caucasian workers. When Prince Yaroslav began to build St. Sophia of Kiev, 900 years ago, in celebration of his victory over the Pechenegs, the city was already one of the most flourishing in Europe. The frescoes that can still be seen on the walls of the spiral stairways of this Cathedral provide evidence of the abandonment of Scandinavian customs for those more closely related with Slav traditions. In the nave there are portraits of Yaroslav's family, of his consort Irina, daughter of King Olaf of Sweden, and of their daughters, Anna who married Henry the First of France, Elizabeth, future wife of King Harold of Norway who was killed at Stamford Bridge fighting for the English crown, and Anastasia, future Queen of Hungary. Opposite them is a contemporary portrait of Yaroslav's eldest son, who married a sister of Casimir, King of Poland. Kiev was obviously regarded with favour in the courts of the West at a period when other Slav states, Moravia, Bulgaria, the Baltic Slavs, the Czechs and the Poles were losing their independence, political and religious.

Kiev was in many ways an extremely advanced city. Its laws were enlightened, more humane than those of most European states. There was no death penalty or corporal punishment. Its schools were unique in Europe in accepting pupils of both sexes. It offered refuge to political exiles from many lands.

The part this great mediaeval city played in the early history of Russia was not to end with its sack by the Mongols in 1240, for the internal struggle of the Slav spirit to assert itself had produced a patriotic literature which in its written and oral form inspired the Russian people for centuries and set the pattern for later creation. And this, too had its origin in these little hills.

It originated in the rivalry between Greek and Russian for cultural supremacy in Kiev and the lands of the Kiev

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State. " Gaze also upon the city radiant in its majesty, upon the flourishing churches, upon growing Christianity, gaze upon the city consecrated by sacred ikons shining and fragrant with incense, ringing with praise and divine song," thus wrote Hilarion, the first Russian Metropolitan of Kiev, elected in 1051, against Greek opposition. His noble, philosophic Discourse concerning the Old and the New Testament enjoyed widespread popularity at a time when Russian opinion was rallying behind the patriotic idea that Kiev, not Constantinople, was their spiritual capital.

The same theme was taken up by the folk sagas of the 10th and 11th centuries, which have remained a living force in Russia to our days. With their distant echo of songs composed between the Dnieper and the Carpathians in earlier days of Slav history, they expressed the desire of the people to preserve the memory of its heroes in the struggle for the political unity of the Russian folk. They record a solidarity between people and ruler that is quite remarkable in popular poetry. If the prince or monarch is not the central figure then it is some roving, semi-legendary representative of the common people who leads them against the prince's enemies. These songs handed down from generation to generation through Russia's history have fostered a pride in common ancestors who shed their blood for the independence of their land. During the later years of the Kiev State when danger was looming in the East they helped to preserve a popular unity which the princes, basing their personal interests in new scattered centres, were denying. They were the channel along which the patriotic spirit of Kiev flowed to Suzdal and Vladimir and finally to Moscow; and when the time came for the Central Russian lands to be faced with the danger of annihilation from East and from West, it was these folk-sagas that preserved the old cultural heritage and taught the Russian people that justice always triumphed and that evil would go down before the arms of him whose cause was

righteous. There is no need to stress how important a part in the moral mobilisation of Russia in the late war was played by this theme.

In these hills above the Dnieper we can still find material evidence of the vitality of Russian culture in its early days, notwithstanding the losses that have been inflicted by successive sackings and sieges, and by frequent alien occupations. The stability of Slav popular tradition during the period of greatest contact with foreign ideas enabled Kiev to assimilate non-Russian influences without losing its own character. This, perhaps, is the main difference between Kiev and Byzantium, whose magnificent conglomeration of styles advertised it as the capital of an empire but not of a people. The Greek architects and painters that were brought to Kiev in the tenth century found that their Russian patrons already had tastes and standards of their own. For many years the churches of Kiev, as those of cities under its dominion, were built in a manner that showed how strong was the Russian tradition derived from construction in wood, and when eventually a fusion of elements was achieved the result was original and national. Seven centuries later Italian architects working in Kiev were faced with a similar problem of resolving the conflict between Eastern and Western church architecture in terms of stone and plaster, and again the result was a national style, less uncouth than post-Petrovian Russian, less urbane than Western European Baroque. It would take us too far if we were to attempt to illustrate this thesis with examples from literature and painting, where the Russians showed no less tenacity. The moving and eloquent voice that is heard in " The Tale of Igor's Host," with its stirring appeal for the unity of the Russian people, is purely Russian. The vivid, dignified style in which the Kiev Chronicles tell the story of the struggle of native Slavonic forces to assert themselves, has its roots in popular ballad. Even in the very foyer of Greek

culture in Kiev, the Cathedral of St. Sophia, there are frescoes contemporary with the Byzantine mosaics that are clearly the work of native craftsmen, with little respect for the " Book of the Painter " to which their colleagues from the Mediterranean adhered so faithfully.

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What a place for dreaming one's way back into the past are these hills above Kiev ! One can picture those high-pooped Norse vessels creeping along the rugged, uninviting Murman coast with its barren granite cliffs, the tundra, a peaty plain of lakes, swamps and bogs revealing no signs of life, as the look-out scanned it for the landmarks indicated on the crude charts. Here the trees are crippled dwarfs almost without branches. A hundred years old, they are but a few feet high, a few inches thick and deeply encrusted with lichens. This, surely, must be the land of trolls, of hideous creatures with felt hoods that conceal all but the teeth and the terrible eyes. Mirages confuse these Norse sailors. Objects on the horizon are distorted vertically and sometimes a second image of that object appears inverted above it, and even a third above the others. Little wonder that the records of these voyages abounded in hair-raising tales and incredible incidents. If the accounts of raiding in the dusk are accurate these journeys into the White Sea must have been made during the short season between the end of the nightless days and the beginning of winter. Our Norse sailors would have had to contend with snow, with the dense white fogs that together with the white tide-rips in it, give the sea into which the Dvina flows its name. Their nights were illumined by the awesome Northern Lights. The snow-clad ships gleam eerily. Across the whole of the heavens a green powdery light is brushed as with the finest

of brushes, a diffusion of colour rather than a glow of light. Its tone changes constantly from green to pale-rose and its palpitations are as gentle as the fading and reglowing of the ash of birch-wood in the fire. Against this softness there appears a succession of blunt crystalline shapes, which jerk constantly into new patterns suspended haphazard about the sky. There came to my mind when first I saw these Northern Lights from the deck of a small ship sailing in convoy to Archangel, the words from the first chapter of the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel . . . ." a great cloud, and a fire unfolding itself and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire." One can, without difficulty imagine the feelings of the Norsemen when after such voyages they saw the " great hall brightly illumined " and heard the " merry din " of the Slavs beside the Dvina. And if Oddr was in reality Oleg it is easy to understand how willingly he established his rule in Kiev on the green hills overlooking the boundless steppe above the calm flowing river.

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One is jerked back to present-day issues by the sight of a column of German prisoners-of-war returning from clearance work in the ruins of Kiev to their camp on the hills. The savage destruction wrought on this father of Russian cities during the late war completely obliterated its ancient thoroughfare, the Kreshchatik and streets and buildings for a quarter of a mile on each side of it, wrecked its three bridges spanning the Dnieper, damaged three-quarters of its buildings, and wiped out 300,000 of its inhabitants. The invader spared neither old nor new in his vandalous destruction of Kiev's buildings, as he spared neither old nor young in the massacre of Babi Yar. When I visited Kiev soon

after its liberation, it seemed that its history as a great city had come, if not to an end, then once again to a long break in its continuity.

To these doubts the Kievlians have replied with an act of faith, the inspiration for which, I suspect, comes as much from their reading of their past as from their vision of the future. And because faith requires symbols the first act of the municipal government of Kiev after liberation was to lay the foundations of a new Kreshchatik. Already by the end of the war a broad, glossy new highway had been spread on the site of this ancient street where the inhabitants of Kiev have foregathered for time immemorial. Badly-housed, hungry, ill-dressed, the people saw in this enterprise, in which at first all lent a hand, a challenge to the ruins that hemmed them in, a brave declaration that a city would again be raised worthy of Kiev's traditions and of the magnificent opportunities that nature has provided. The first casting to be done in the city's iron-works, nine-tenths of which had been destroyed, were ornamental lamps for the new Kreshchatik. It was a strangely stirring sight, this road in 1945. For most of its length there were no shop windows to attract the eye, just piles of dusty rubble from which twisted girders protruded savagely. Children played at partisans in this monotonous landscape. Beyond it, the gaunt corpses of eight-storey buildings towered dreadfully. For half a mile one saw that most melancholy of sights, the sky through gaping glassless windows, the ten thousand blind eyes of ancient Kiev. Yet the popular habit of walking the Kreshchatik had not been broken. To and fro, with the leisurely pace that at once distinguishes the Kievlian from the impatient Moscovite, apparently quite oblivious to the ghastliness of their surroundings, the people promenaded at the traditional hours.

My work has taken me to many of Europe's ruined cities, to ravished Warsaw and the pulverized heart of Wroclaw.

I have clambered over ruins in Essen to watch sewage pumped out of the cellars of houses where children slept seven in a room. A Baedeker doesn't help any more in old Nurnberg, Wurzburg is just a refuelling point on the road to Frankfurt where the G.I.'s cuddle the Frauleins in corners of Fugger's bank. There are ruins everywhere in Europe today, in a part of Prague that some bomber-squadron leader thought was Dresden, in most of Dresden which somebody thought was a good place to demonstrate to the Russians how their allies could bomb, in hill-top towns in the Black Forest as in the Sudeten valleys. Ruined Europe is not dead, everywhere some sort of patching, planning, clearing is going on and meanwhile life in the ruins continues, brave, corrupt, extravagant, impoverished. But in Kiev, I found a resistance to the forces of decay sturdier than anywhere else. Each step in the rebuilding of the city has been taken with a view to its effect on the Kiev of the future, and apace with the erection of new buildings care is being lavished on the preservation of those profoundly significant ancient buildings that have survived, the Golden Gate, St. Sophia, Rastrelli's Palace, and the damaged Lavra.

This new awareness of the past as a source of inspiration is closely linked with the love of Motherland that was so greatly intensified during the war. As men crouched on the banks of the great rivers from which the long rafts used to float and watched cities burn where for centuries craftsmen practised their specialities, as they saw ancient towers of Kremlins tumble and the roofs of new schools and theatres fall in, as they fought among the benches of Stalingrad's Red October works and stood beside the blocked shafts of Donbass pits, they learned to feel for their country in a new way. The scout who lay on the edge of the birch-woods with his face pressed against the clover discovered all Russia in those few feet of land. That wild-cherry tree that the German slashed as he ordered the peasant girl

to kill him a fowl became all the trees of the boundless forests of Russia. Those gaunt blackened brick-stoves that stood among the charred ruins of humble villages near Moscow roused the wrath of the Siberian divisions as Englishmen were stirred when a bomb fell on the village church and cancelled out a long-familiar view. For the Russian land is holy, whatever the faith of its rulers.

The sense of loss was all the greater since the enemy had swept over an area that contained many of Russia's most precious monuments, closely associated with familiar events in Russian history. Leningrad is ringed about with the jagged ruins of its Elizabethan and Catherine palaces. The destruction of Peterhof was described and felt as a national catastrophe. It was from a native of the Cherkessian region of the Caucasus that I heard the most indignant and shocked account of its ruins. At Great Novgorod many unique monuments of the XI-XIV centuries perished. The Church of the Salvation at Nereditsa, the Church of the Uspeniya at Volotovo, the Church of the Salvation at Kovalevo, the Church of St. Michael at Skorovodko, the Church of The Annunciation, Blagoveshchenniye at Gorodishche, each a precious gem in a collection none too large, were victims of the German occupation of North-Western Russia.

Yet while the ample stage of Russian history is flooded with a light more poignant, reverent and revealing in these post-war days, those who control the spot-lights continue to work according to a carefully prepared plan, throwing into prominence characters whose deeds point a moral to contemporary Russia, obscuring others who in present circumstances have nothing significant to contribute to a pageant that from beginning to end is an exposition of the dominant theories of the Communist Party. Much new scenery has been introduced of late, remarkable for its exuberant Russian motives and the revival of colours that had gone out of fashion. The batteries of lights pierce into corners that

had long been obscure. Some notable historical characters have been given new costumes. Scenes which used to be played in a cruelly harsh light are now softened by the use of different filters. The chorus remains, the restless, surging Russian mass, but the protagonists who step forward from it into a pool of light are no longer the same, Stenka Razin, the rebel, has yielded place to Ivan Susanin, the peasant who gave his life for his country. The public is spellbound. The scenes revealed by the rising curtain are unfamiliar but they record the names and deeds of their ancestors. For the people of the Soviet Union's Asiatic republics the discovery of their history is a revelation of something as strange and exciting as a hydro-electric station in the Kara-Kum Desert. To a crowd of Moscow workers watching the projection of a historical film on the walls of Kitay Gorod during the celebrations of the Revolution's 30th anniversary, the reconstruction of the storming of the Winter Palace and of Lenin's surreptitious journey to Smolny provide an answer to that question which Russians, perhaps, put to themselves more often than most people : " Who am I and whence do I come ? "

The Bolsheviks were not the first to depart from the strict standards of objectivity in the presentation of Russian history. Nine hundred years ago Prince Vladimir of Kiev took away from the monk Nestor his draft of the first Russian Chronicle and gave it to others to rewrite with instructions about what ought to be emphasised, and since that time until today the most important epochs in Russian history have been the subject of disputation. According to the political circumstances in which they wrote, historians have gone from one extreme to the other in their interpretations of the Viking's role in the foundation of the Kiev State, of the character of Ivan Grozny, the morals of Catherine II, the relative importance of the various revolutionary movements of the 19th century. The careful shaping treatment

given the history of the Revolution and the Civil War is nothing new in Russian life. And as in earlier examples of the use of state power and its weapon, the official censor, to reshape the past, the results provide a sure pointer to the dominant theory of the times.

The main lessons that the Communists wish the citizens of post-war U.S.S.R. to draw from their past are, it seems to me, that the Russian State grew out of the patriotic and original efforts of the early Slavs and occupied a leading place among the European nations, that while being exposed to many foreign influences, the Russian tradition was always sufficiently stable to transform them in the process of assimilation, and thirdly, that throughout its history Russia has produced an abundance of progressive, enlightened men sometimes as leaders, sometimes in opposition to the rulers. At the same time, one may learn something of the views of the present leaders of the Soviet Union by noting what is *not* praised in Russia's past. No credit whatsoever is given, either in schoolbooks or in popular historical literature to those who built the Russian empire at the expense of non-Russian peoples, a most careful distinction being drawn between monarchs who united the Russian lands by integrating them into a single state or by driving out the invader, and those who pushed the imperial frontiers forward at the expense of the peoples of Asia or the Caucasus. Honours to the empire-builders are confined to the explorers, the scientists, the navigators. Similar discrimination is shown in regard to military leaders of the past. Not Suvorov, who led Russian armies beyond her frontiers but Kutuzov, the defender of Moscow, is the popular hero. Even during the war, the anniversaries, celebrations that gave a new validity to the reputations of Shchedrin, Krylov the fablist, Griboyedov and the painter Repin among others, were the occasions for reminding the public that the principle reason for honouring these representatives of Russian culture

was the progressive character of their creation and the roles they played in the struggle against the reactionary forces of the Tsarist regime. There is no place for chauvinism in the new traditions that are being formed though the fact that they are new and that they are being created with all the devices of modern propaganda often leads to an assertiveness and a tendency to hyperbolise that may easily give an impression to the contrary.

The emphasis that is now being laid on the part that Russian scientists, inventors and pioneers in other fields have played in the development of European civilization has nothing in common with the chauvinistic pretensions that were characteristic of Nazi Germany. National pride has undoubtedly something to do with it, but the main reason for it is probably the Communist Party's determination to get rid of that self-depreciation which has been a brake on Russian initiative in the past. For a number of reasons Western Europe has consistently overlooked Russia's outstanding contributions to science and engineering and even today standard Soviet text-books frequently fail to credit Russian and Soviet scientific research with important success. The failure of Tsarist Russia to follow up the discoveries of its scientists in the field of bio-chemistry, electrotechnics, and radio, and the neglect of promising inventions in textile machinery and the development of the steam-engine, have sharpened the determination of the Soviet Union's present rulers not to let such things happen again.

There is little doubt that the opening of new fields is having a considerable effect on the Russian mind, which as we have suggested, was peculiarly receptive in the post-war period to appeals of love of motherland and respect for its heroes. In spite of much that is said and written in the Soviet Union, no doubt for dialectical reasons, about subservience to the West, the educated Russian of today

seems to be fully convinced of the independence and originality of his people, and if one is to judge from their contemporary literature the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union are reacting in a similar way to the new educative influences at play. Indeed, the Central Committee's Propaganda and Agitation Branch has had occasionally to intervene to restrain some of the republics from honouring national heroes whose claims to fame are dubious to say the least, and, in the case of the Ukraine, to check the rise of a nationalistic rather than a national spirit. " There are in evidence dangerous bourgeois nationalistic distortions, with writers ignoring the community of the Russian and Ukrainian cultures " stated Alexander Korneichuk in 1947. " They are slurring over the beneficial influence of progressive Russian literature on Ukrainian literature. Their slogan seemed to be ' Further from Moscow ' " : Some trans-Caucasian writers were similarly reprimanded for depicting their countries' early days as golden ages. The Kazan Tartars were in trouble for honouring as a national hero a man whose only distinction was that he led his people against the Russians on a number of plundering raids. Obviously, the popularizer of past achievements has to steer a careful course.

A striking example of the way old words have acquired new meanings as the Russian views on the relations between nations have changed is provided by the revival of the idea of Slavonic collaboration, the cause of much misunderstanding and indeed of malicious campaigning against the Soviet Union. It is over a century since in the minds of two Slovaks, the poet Jan Kollar and the *savant* Pavel Jozef Safarik, arose the idea of collaboration between the Slavs for the purpose of securing personal liberty and national independence. Russian official circles of that day took up a negative attitude towards the democratic features of the Slav Manifesto of 1848 which had condemned political

discrimination between classes and had called for the same measures of rights and duties for all. The movement, consequently, was not able to become a realistic political force, for Russia was at that time not only lacking in freedom within her frontiers but was herself the oppressor of Poles, Ukrainians and Byelorussians. The fact that Tsarist diplomacy used Pan-Slavism to further its own aims did not prevent the growth of sympathy between Russia and other Slav peoples. Collaboration between the Slavonic nations was no more feasible after the 1917 Revolution had changed the situation in Russia. Polish oppression of her Slav minorities, the pretensions of the Serbs to dominate the Croats of Jugoslavia, and the subordination of the national interests of several Slav lands, first to French, then to German interests brought disunity and finally disruption to Eastern Europe. The second World War fundamentally changed the relationship between the Slavonic nations. Together they faced the threat to their very existence and together they emerged victorious. For the first time in modern history the Slav peoples became fully the masters of their fate, of the natural resources of their lands, and each of these countries turned to socialist measures of reconstruction to wipe out the consequences of the war. " We are doing now what we intended to do in 1918 had the English and the French allowed us to," Dr. Edouard Benes declared to me three months after the end of the war; and statesmen in Poland and Jugoslavia were talking in the same vein as they introduced measures to complete the only half-effective national revolutions of 1917-18.

From the Russian viewpoint, present-day collaboration among the Slavonic nations is primarily a precaution against the possibility of a new aggression on Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union, whose economic contacts with the Slavonic lands were on the smallest scale before the war, has taken a leading part in reviving trade with these lands, based on

the principle of enabling them to develop their industries without calling in foreign capital. At the same time cultural relations have been established by which, gradually, the harm done by many years of deliberate misrepresentation of Soviet aims and achievements is being wiped out. For her part, Russia is gaining much from the contacts with other peoples made possible by the removal of barriers. A considerable number of Soviet writers, musicians, historians and other representatives of the intelligentsia have visited the Slav capitals, Prague in particular, and the flow of ideas between Moscow and Central Europe is a factor that has to be taken into account in considering the intellectual development of post-war U.S.S.R. If it is true that the cause of much misunderstanding between peoples, as between nations, is lack of knowledge, a welcome should be given to this means of strengthening personal contacts between members of different lands whose recent history has created so many artificial barriers.

An interesting example of the importance attached by the Communists to a " correct " reading of history was provided by the controversy that went on over the Moscow Bolshoi Theatre's production of the opera " Boris Godunov," the most important event in the theatrical season of 1946-47. For some reasons not fully disclosed the producers left out the " Scene near Kromy " which shows the Polish-led peasant rising against Tsar Boris and his Boyars. Considerable discussion was evoked by this omission and to clarify the position *Culture and Life*, the organ of the Party's Propaganda and Agitation branch, called a conference and subsequently published an account of it which, according to *Pravda*, was " extremely incomplete and inaccurate." The party pundits disapproved of the " Scene near Kromy " because, according to their reading of it, the crowd, the Jesuits and the Polish interventionists, all joined in glorification of the false Dmitri, pretender to the Tsar's throne :

Pravda, two months later, found this reading outrageous. The scene in question, it protested, was the central part of the drama showing the Russian labouring folk in accordance with historical facts, at a time when their anger burst forth as a threatening force. Under Boris Godunov, it argued, the discontent of the Russian peasants expressed itself first in revolt then in war, but as in every peasant revolution of the past, the peasant war at the end of the 16th century though possessing a tremendous spontaneous force lacked sufficient political consciousness. The peasants did not know the true way to their liberation and frequently went astray in search of their paths, sometimes supporting adventurers and yielding to demagogic deception. These fugitive slaves, the " wanderers " of Mussorgski's opera, had a limited political horizon that made it possible for the false Dmitri and the Poles to use the peasant risings. *Pravda*, however, reminded the critics that at the end of the scene, a song is sung which could be called the hymn of the spontaneous peasant revolution, which showed the freedom-loving Russian people in all their strength, courage and daring. " We see " it wrote, " the popular force which subsequently, moving through the school of historic tests, drove the interventionists from Russian soil, saved the country and produced men like Susanin."

In contemporary Moscow a controversy over a scene in an historical opera is no storm in a tea-cup. If it illustrates the extreme prudence with which the Communists approach every interpretation of history, it is no less indicative of the important part in the shaping of the Soviet mind taken by chronicles of the past and tales of Russia's heroes.

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In July, 1947, *Bolshevik*, the most influential Communist magazine, sharpened the tone in which the theme of Soviet

patriotism was being played. Laying emphasis on the pre-revolutionary status of Russia, described as a country unable to develop its resources because of its dependence on foreign capital, it examined the consequences of this " colonial status " in the cultural field. The Russians, it contended, had been treated as an inferior people, incapable of original thought or of making any valuable contributions to science. Distinguished Russian inventors had been robbed of the credit of their discoveries. However, the Revolution had destroyed this ancient legend that Russia hung behind the West, destined to be a vague and feeble imitation of it. It had placed Russia in the van as far as socialism was concerned and it had given the people of the Soviet Union a new confidence in their strength.

Where did Fascism come from? *Bolshevik* asked. Not from the Soviet part of the world but from the Western capitalist world, as a child of its social structure. Bred in the West, Fascism had been defeated in the Soviet land. " Before all the world now, and for ever, stands the fact that the Soviet people in their selfless struggle saved European civilisation from destruction, from ruin." Yet, the paper continued, there were still some who had not realised this and who, especially in their attitude towards bourgeois culture remained obsequious. To raise Soviet patriotism to new heights, the fatherland had to be strengthened against all who in peacetime were, by slandering the Soviet Union, by reducing the vigilance of its people and sapping people's pride in their land, inspired by the same aims as those enemies who attacked Russia on the field of battle. " It is clear that any who, in one way or another, help them are traitors to their country," *Bolshevik* warned. The honour and interests of the Soviet state had to be protected at all costs. The nation's heroes deserved honour and acclaim but a distinction had to be made between those who were glorified for their services to the Soviet state and those who

sought self-glory, un-patriotic individuals in whom " English and American imperialists and their agents " were seeking to revive individual ambition contrary to the general interest. And, finally, it was the duty of all Soviet citizens to be on their guard against these " crafty enemies," to raise Soviet patriotism to a higher pitch, to defeat any tendency to be subservient or obsequious before foreigners or to be careless in their dealings with the intelligence agents of bourgeois reaction.

Foreigners whose work in Moscow brought them in touch with responsible Russians found ample evidence that *Bolshevik's* advice was being taken to heart, though in their personal relations with foreigners, the Russian people were, as ever, frank, friendly and sincere.

Meanwhile, during the winter of 1947-48, the moral that Soviet science must be more self-reliant was being rubbed in hard through the medium of the theatre. " A Great Force " by B. Romashov, produced at the Maly Theatre, is typical in this category.

Pavel Lavrov, a Moscow Professor, has discovered a chemical secret of world-wide importance. In completing his research he encounters the opposition of the Director of the Institute, Milyagin, who, mainly as a result of going abroad, has lost his interest in scientific work and has become a sharp business man. Personal success had gone to his head. He occupies himself inordinately with the decoration of his cosy *datcha* and is enraptured when an American magazine prints an article about his institute. His daughter is shown to have been spoiled by the influence of Hollywood.

Milyagin does not wish to help Lavrov because he does not believe in Soviet science. He is full of deference to everything foreign. Between him and Pavel Lavrov the following dialogue takes place:

Milyagin: They have not yet been able to do this in America. What are you thinking of?

Pavel: That's just it. That's the whole trouble. You are convinced that they can do anything there. . . . and I tell you that we can do far more. . . . Our science cannot help being the most advanced in the world.

Milyagin: Our science? We have no science. Your science! Science belongs to the entire world.

Pavel: No, I shall never agree to that. What is dear to me is what is done in my own country, by our hands.

During the action of the play the superficiality of Milyagin is revealed. In the words of the *Pravda* critic, " Malyagin has accepted the prejudices of bourgeois scientists of the days before the Revolution, when the backwardness of Tsarist Russia and the deference of noble and bourgeois circles taught a slavish deference to all things foreign!"

At a reception Lavrov makes a speech of condemnation against Milyagin and his sort. " You will forgive me," he exclaims, " I, of course, am only an ordinary research worker . . . . But I feel a sense of shame when I hear such self-debasing admiration of all things foreign. . . . I am simply ashamed. We are not such ignorant and poor people as to walk along begging for help.

Milyagin: Pavel, no one is begging, but what is good is good.

Pavel: Do we not intercept what is good? Are we not learning? We are most respectful of advanced foreign technology and science. . . . The point is that our people are vigorous, bold, progressive. . . . There is no need for us to look through a peep-hole to see what is going on in European culture. We ourselves are creating

valuable things and can take pride in our labour, our people and our young state! We have accomplished something in science too and we shall accomplish a thousand times more. There is no need for us to stand on tip-toes before European civilisation! I cannot but be interested in what goes on in the world. I am disturbed by various new doctrines, by declarations in Fulton. All of this touches me deeply. . . . and it seems to me crazy that while the monopolists abroad are making new blocs against our country, we still hear this drivel about some sort of advantages of European culture. Of course, we still have people who think that ' we do not know how to live ' . . . . They do not wish to understand, these people, that we are now on the offensive. . . ."

Chapter Six

MOSCOW NEW AND OLD

IN September, 1947, the city of Moscow celebrated its 800th anniversary with the largest, most brilliant and beyond doubt, most popular civic festival since Victory Day. Myriads of lights glittered on the walls of the Kremlin, for three nights in succession the people danced in the squares, and for once the solemn portraits of the Politbureau were joined with those of more romantic figures from Russia's past. In Kiev a ceremony took place at the grave of Yuri Dolgoruki, founder of Moscow, in the Monastery of the Redeemer. In the capital tens of thousands trailed for miles behind the Lord Mayor as he proceeded to lay the foundation stones of four new skyscrapers.

The political tone of the celebrations was set by Stalin who in a message to the city from his villa in the Caucasus wrote: " Only a country united in a single centralised state can count on the possibility of real cultural economic growth, on the possibility of consolidating its independence. The historic services of Moscow lie in the fact that it has been and remains the foundation and the initiator in the building of a centralised state in Russia."

For the average Moscovite the passage in Stalin's message that had more significance was the one in which he underlined the importance of providing new, well-built houses for the workers. Since the Revolution the expansion of Moscow's population has outpaced the provision of new

buildings. But in 1947 Moscow was the only great city in the world which had been able to resume its pre-war building programme. In this chapter I shall attempt to show what serious obstacles had to be overcome before this was possible, on what lines the new Moscow is being built and what is the character of the capital of the Russian Republic and the Soviet Union.

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By the end of the war, Moscow was a badly run-down city. The main achievements of the '30s, the arterial roads, the open spaces about the Kremlin, the granite embankments of the Moskva and Yauza rivers with their finely designed bridges, the Metro, these foundations of the new Moscow envisaged in the 1935 plan, had stood up well to the wear-and-tear of the war years. To Moscovites no less than to foreigners they provided tangible evidence that work that is rated important enough to receive the best materials and the most skilled labour, is well done in the Soviet Union. The results of the vast capital investment carried out in Moscow during the decade before the war have a solid substantial appearance.

But the ambitious, though essential practicable programme of expansion of which they were a part had been wholly suspended at the beginning of the war. Of the city's major schemes only the extension of the Metro was resumed during the war. Gaunt, as forbidding in their rawness as the skeletons of the burned-out City of London, the frames of unfinished apartment houses lined the main roads that radiate from Moscow to the ancient cities of central Russia, to Kaluga and Mozhaisk, to Dmitrov, Yaroslavl, Vladimir. They served as gloomy reminders of the great development plans that the outbreak of war called to a halt. In 1941 alone

it had been proposed to build homes equivalent in floor-space to about one-eighth of the total area of Moscow's living space in the year of the Revolution. Moscovites never tire of describing the astonishing spectacle of their city in those days. For twenty miles of their length, the banks of the Moskva and Yauza were re-carved, terraced, palisaded, covered with scaffolding, reinforced with concrete and iron. Enormous blocks of apartment buildings arose, with their monumental gateways, their inevitable rows of pillars, their patches of decorative marble and superfluous friezes. The vast construction work carried out under the 1935 plan provided the foreign visitor with some idea of the dynamic forces at work re-shaping the whole of the Soviet Union. They returned to their lands, burdened with unemployment and the effects of past and present depressions, with tales of a city under assault by demolition-teams, architects and builders, of whole regions of little wooden houses disappearing almost over-night, of the simultaneous construction of four huge bridges across the Moskva, of two dozen large inhabited stone buildings being moved back by the street-wideners on electrically operated rollers. All this the war stopped as abruptly as a clock stops when its main spring snaps.

The exigencies of war took away from the building trade not only its hands and its sources of material, but most of its machinery, and it was the shortage of mechanical aids to building that was to prove the most serious handicap in the immediate post-war period. Here again, an example is provided of the difference in the ways in which national economies in the West and in the East were affected by the war. The armies that Britain and the United States put into the field, by and large, used equipment specially designed and manufactured for war. Russia, too, converted her industries to war purposes, but in her necessity, Russia went further, giving the Red Army not only the productive

capacity of her factories but most of the equipment with which civilian life coped with its daily needs; tractors, horses and carts from the farms, excavators and bulldozers, even wheel-barrows and spades from the building trade. When the armies of General Vatutin forced the Dnieper they used fishermens' boats as well as landing barges. Many of the buses in which the wounded were carried along the pot-holed roads behind the front had once brought farmers to market. Every taxi and private car from the streets of Leningrad and Moscow was mobilised for war service. Siberian reinforcements streaming Westward for the defence of Moscow in 1941 gathered up skis and sledges which the farmers brought in thousands to the railway stations between the Urals and the front. The country stripped itself to the very bone and everything they gave was consumed in the furnaces of war. When victory came the Soviet Union was virtually without any of the essential means by which to set about repairing the damage it had sustained.

The totality of the Soviet war effort made itself felt with special severity on the buildings of Moscow, for while the city-in-the-making halted its progress, the city-in-being deteriorated. Houses scheduled for demolition had their lives prolonged. The temporary became semi-permanent. And meanwhile the city lay practically defenceless before the destructive impact of the Russian climate. While thousands of guns raised a barrage which the Luftwaffe found impenetrable, other enemies, frost, snow and the incalculable thaw, attacked the city. With good reason, the City Soviet recommended hundreds of its house-managers for the Defence of Moscow medal, in recognition of their steadfastness and ingenuity in those days in the winter of 1941 when many Moscow houses were empty. In the block where I was later to live, a young Latvian woman, widowed in the early days of the war, by profession an accountant, was detailed by the Regional Soviet to remain

in Moscow in single-handed charge of three large apartment houses where evacuees from Leningrad and Smolensk were temporarily lodged. It was impossible to heat them that winter, they were several times showered with incendiaries, but somehow, often helped by the army, she saved state property and was later rewarded with the Red Banner of Labour.

In Moscow the annual battle with the elements is never lightly won. Each spring reveals its cost in bulging walls, the frayed edges of pavements, trees split by the iron frost, sagging roofs and patches of mouldering damp. A typical house of the older Moscow will enter the winter with its stucco whole and its paintwork bright; it will emerge, with the framework of rough-hewn timber exposed, a drab and shabby dwelling before it has had its May-day repairs. For weeks the trees in the gardens under the Kremlin walls are reflected in a sombre lake of melted snow. On the outskirts of the city, fields and banks emerge with a bruised appearance as if they had been pounded and scratched by giants.

During the war years this battle went on, but with more casualties and with greater expenditure of individual effort. Sometimes in midwinter I made use of my night-pass to walk through the streets of central Moscow. An eerie silence brooded over the blacked-out city, the more striking because in peace-time the streets of Moscow are alive and bright until long after midnight. But there was always one sound to accompany the shrill squeak of one's boots on the frozen snow, the sound of the thudding crowbars which women, bundled up in quilted jackets, plied all night against the caked ice on the streets, a job as lonely, I used to think then, and, when the temperature was below zero Fahrenheit, as taxing as sentry work at the front.

To grasp the post-war position of Moscow fully, it is necessary to take into account another factor besides that

of the deterioration that went on virtually unchecked for three or four years. This is the abnormally rapid growth of population in the capital of the Soviet Union since the Revolution, three times the pace at which New York or Chicago grew at the height of their expansion.

In 1917, a war-year in which the population was probably already somewhat inflated, it was roughly $1\frac{3}{4}$ million. By 1920 it had fallen to less than a million and it is interesting to note that in that year the average housing space for every citizen of Moscow was 12 square metres, which, making allowances for differences in methods of calculation, corresponds to the standard that the English were aiming at in most of their municipal housing schemes during the '30s. But though on paper the 1920 situation looks satisfactory it was in fact far from so. Pre-revolutionary Moscow was characterised by a glaring contrast between upper-middle class apartments of a size and style comparable with the homes of the corresponding class in Western and Central Europe, and cellars, doss-houses and barrack houses where about half-a-million workers lived. When during the years shortly after the Revolution the workers were transferred into the apartments of the former bourgeoisie, inequalities may have been substantially reduced but it would take a long stretch of the imagination to consider that the communal living arrangements which half a dozen families in occupation of a middle-class flat had to devise, represented any ultimate standard.

But 1920 was, as far as living-space was concerned, a year to be looked back on with longing during the next eight or nine years when the population rose from one to 2.2 million with practically no building accomplished. It was not until the first Five Year Plan was launched in 1928 that any substantial addition was made to the 12 million square metres of housing area available in the year of the Revolution. From that time the building of new houses

though failing to keep up with the rapid increase of population, was raising the standard of living by providing alternatives, more hygienic, better serviced, to the primitive homes in which Russian society had been content to let its working-class inhabit. Too much importance can be attached to the factor of space in calculating living-standards. The point about the conditions in which 70% of pre-revolutionary Moscow's inhabitants lived is not that they had too little room but that most of it was underground, ill-lit, badly ventilated and heated in the most primitive manner. Consideration of how Muscovites live today compared whi earlier standards must also take into account the many alternatives to home-life provided by libraries, clubs, theatres and other amenities for communal use. On the other hand, it would, in this writer's opinion, be misjudging the situation to assume that the average Russian accepts these alternatives as a satisfactory substitute for a room of his own. I have always found the Russian as much a home-lover as the traditional Englishman. Few people would make such good use of a little more room in their homes as the Russians.

But there are conditions which the Soviet citizen of today with newly acquired scruples about cleanliness and hygiene will not stand. Not far from where I live lies a district where many of the doss-houses of the kind described by Maxim Gorky in *Lower Depths* were situated. The Pokrovski Gate into the inner city was not far away and many of the older buildings in this neighbourhood have cellars where on the earth floor carters and porters used to sleep, together with thousands of seasonal visitors to the capital, the illiterate, bewildered, debased peasant paupers who hung about the factory gates in search of work. No-one lives in these cellars now and the house-manager who would permit anybody to do so would soon be in trouble. Since 1936 the city authorities have had powers to evict from slums

without offering alternative accommodation. In spite of the stringencies of the time, the Soviet authorities are perfectionists in these matters and remain strict in their enforcement of standards of public health. The freedom from epidemics during the war and the steady fall in the tuberculosis rate in Moscow provides a convincing reply to those who argue that the Russians should be more "realistic" and ease the Moscow housing problem by lowering standards, and thus removing the disqualification that prevents many basements serving the purpose they were doing before the Revolution.

Probably the most important decision taken by the Government towards resolving Moscow's housing problem was the restriction of the growth of the city's population within the limit of five million, the first time in modern history, apparently, that a great city has attempted to regulate its population. Announced in 1935, it provided the planners with an aim towards which all their projects for municipal and cultural facilities were henceforth to be keyed. As far as housing was concerned it meant that from about 1943 onwards, when the increase of population would have reached its permitted maximum, the process by which new construction lagged behind growth of population would have been reversed, each year seeing a progressively increasing improvement in housing standards. Unevenness in development in the '30s was not unexpected since the city was mainly concerned with laying the foundations for its eventual expansion, providing the water, power, communications worthy of an All-Union capital. It had, nevertheless, intensified the stringent housing problem, for while in 1936 Moscow could offer its 3½ million inhabitants housing space of a little less than 16½ million square metres, in 1940 with a population of 4½ million, the housing area was still short of 18 million square metres. The average had fallen by half a square metre per head. This however did not deter

the city's leading authorities from expressing their belief that if war could be avoided the Moscow of 1956 would be the best-housed city in the world, as far as the average citizen was concerned.

Contemporary Moscow derives its special character from the struggle between new and old that is going on in every district. It is the reason for the city's rawness, for the contrasts it offers between sordid shabbiness and band-box trimness, between decrepit wooden shacks and the towering apartment houses that line the highways, for the incongruous disparity between the clanking overcrowded tramcars and the super-efficient Metro. The war prolonged the existence of the old Moscow, retarded the growth of the new.

Post-war building took up the loose ends of the 1940 plan, which was a part of the general plan announced five years earlier. But shortage of building materials and machinery caused the main emphasis to be laid on essential repairs during the first year of peace. Not until 1947 did the programme of new construction get into its stride. To the inexpert eye, it seemed that by then most of the damage caused by neglect during the war-years had been made good, and that Moscow was in a position to advance with its plans for reconstruction.

The new programme was announced during the celebrations of the city's 800th birthday. Before examining it, however, it is appropriate to describe the salient features of earlier plans, for, with occasional changes of emphasis, all construction since 1931 has formed part of a single emerging pattern. With the first Five Year Plan for Soviet economy nearing its conclusion, the concentration of industry in Moscow had reached a dangerous point and the most important feature of the 1931 decisions on the city's future was undoubtedly the prohibition of new factory building in the capital. Four years later the Government followed this

up by introducing the measure restricting Moscow's population. Simultaneously it put forward, in the form of a Ten-Year Plan, a blue-print of the future Moscow. During the four years that had passed since the 1931 decisions the main improvements had concerned large-scale public services like the underground railway, the Moscow-Volga Canal, the electrification of suburban railways. The citizens of Moscow were being provided with an object-lesson of the methods that were being applied to Soviet economic expansion in all fields, the result of their leaders' conviction that having grasped the opportunity of making Russia a prosperous land, their duty lay in observing an inflexible programme of priorities. No doubt there were many in Moscow who grumbled that the government was aiming too high, that with their modest ambitions it could the more quickly alleviate the hardships of the average man's life. Nor were all convinced that these aims were attainable. The fundamental reconstruction of Moscow was carried out without, and, in some respects against, the advice of foreign specialists. It was an enterprise conducted under the critical scrutiny of millions, unlike the construction of Stalingrad or Magnitogorsk. Until the public could experience the benefits of an abundant water-supply, of the link between four seas that the Moscow-Volga Canal was to provide, of the Metro and the broad new asphalted roads, the Government was exposed to the accusation that it was building for prestige rather than to improve the lot of the average citizen. Time has justified the correctness of the decisions taken by the Government and the Moscow Soviet. During the war Moscow was the hub on which the whole military effort for the defence of Central Russia turned, and in post-war days it possesses intact the well-laid foundations on which to build a capital worthy of a land of two hundred millions.

By 1935 the country was able to launch schemes that promised to bring substantial relief to the inhabitants of

Moscow by the early '40s. The decisions taken that year, when the population was approaching 3¾ millions gave Moscow for the first time in its history a unified plan, according to which its historical outline was retained, while the disposition of its dwelling-houses, industries and transport were radically organised and congested areas completely eliminated. The Ten-Year Plan envisaged a gradual extension of the territory covered by the city to an area of 60,000 hectares, (150,000 acres) and vested in the Moscow Soviet the fullest possible powers of control over all construction work in the territory of the city and in areas reserved for expansion, including the six-mile deep belt of forest and farm land which was to become the city's Green Belt, " a reservoir of fresh air for the city and a place of recreation for its inhabitants " in the cheerful words of the Government's decree. Thus the planners of Moscow knew what the ultimate area and the population of the city was to be, two fundamental factors on which all good planning must be based.

Some of the features of the Moscow-to-be were common to town-planning in other lands, no matter what their economic or social structure, and in these cases the main differences lies in the powers that authorities have to implement their plans. Thus, the new Moscow, like the new London, was to be re-built on the design of parallel circular main roads with spider-web radials, while there is a similarity between the Russian scheme for creating satellite towns which continue to develop with the capital itself, and the practice of American cities. There are other features, however, which Moscow is justified in claiming as unique, the principle one being the plan to reduce the density of population to an average of four hundred persons per hectare of residential block evenly distributed throughout the entire city. Moscow is alone among the great cities of the world in applying a non-differential rent system, based on the area

of living-space irrespective of location. Its plans are based on the principle that the city's amenities should be equally accessible to all citizens in whatever part of Moscow they live. Not only is the new Moscow a city without slums, it is a city without " exclusive residential areas," without stretches of densely packed working-class houses far from parks and boulevards. In the old Moscow the difference between the density of population in the working class and middle-class districts was in the ratio of six to one. An even greater disproportion existed in the distribution of gas, water, electricity, street paving. The scale of rents operated against the interests of the working class. Before the Revolution the tenants of middle-class apartments paid a monthly rent of 70 kopecks per square metre of living-space, tenants of rooms one rouble per square metre, and those who lived in basements and corners of rooms 1.50 roubles per square metre. The poor in pre-Revolutionary Moscow paid as much as 50% of their wages in rent. Today the average is from 3½ to 4% of earnings.

It is not, of course, the intention of the Soviet authorities that everybody in Moscow should eventually occupy the same size apartment. Such a levelling of differences, irrespective of what the citizen deserves according to his labour, would be against the general trend of Soviet life. But urbanisation plans, in Moscow as elsewhere, provide for equal access to light and air, to parks and other amenities for communal use. Foreign visitors frequently comment on the narrowness of Moscow's new buildings, particularly noticeable from the air. The reason is not the architects' whim or a Soviet ruling on architectural form. It lies in the regulation that all new building should provide for direct daylight to all living rooms, thus ruling out the building of deep airless courts.

A considerable effort of the imagination is still required to enable one to perceive the lineaments of this new develop-

ing Moscow, though perhaps one no greater than is needed to find, in the principle districts of the city, traces of the Moscow of 1931. The drafters of the Ten-Year Plan did not exaggerate when they described the city of those days in these terms : " The narrow and crooked streets, the districts intersected by a multitude of lanes and blind alleys, the uneven distribution of buildings between the centre and the outskirts, the centre encumbered with warehouses and small enterprises, the low, decrepit, houses huddled together, the haphazard distribution of industrial enterprises, railroads and other branches of economy and public services, hinder the normal life of the rapidly developing city, particularly in respect of traffic and make imperative a radical and planned reconstruction." With all its shortcomings, contemporary Moscow can no longer be described in those terms. Today's problems are almost entirely connected with housing and it is in the measures adopted to deal with the housing situation that the post-war situation differs most from previous years.

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There are three main types of domestic buildings in contemporary Moscow—the pre-Revolution apartment houses built between 40 and 60 years ago, the old houses, and houses built since the Revolution. Most of those in the first category have been adapted to accommodate many more families than their architects intended, or have been extended by the addition of superstructures. They are, by and large, solid well-constructed buildings with little to distinguish them from apartment houses for the middle-class built at the same period in Central and Western Europe. Their architects showed neither more nor less respect for native tradition than their colleagues in Vienna, Paris or London.

It was a period of architectural anarchy when factories were being built, usually with foreign capital, in the very heart of Moscow, even near to the Kremlin (the Gustav List factory on the banks of the Moskva river, the Bromley works and a number of workshops and warehouses in the Cathay Town). Moscow had its equivalent of English-Victorian Gothic in the form of tasteless imitations of the Byzantine, old Moscow and Pskov-Novgorod styles. Shechtel's Northern Railway Station was built in an archaic Russian form, and copy-book details were plastered liberally by Sherwood over the Historical Museum in the Red Square, by Monigetti on the outrageous Polytechnical Museum. Oddly, few of these adepts in the ultra-Russian style were Russians themselves. Nor did Moscow escape the exponents of the Vienna Modern school and pre-war constructivism exhibited in Walcott's Hotel Metropole and Klein's emporium for the Scottish firm of Muir and Merilees, two monstrous newcomers in the hitherto purely classical Theatre Square. If the Russian people required any further object-lessons about the harm inflicted on them by mercantile capitalism, they have but to glance at the monuments it raised to itself in Moscow, contributing nothing to charm, brighten or improve the city.

But it did leave a substantial number of spacious apartments into which according to Lazar Kaganovich some half million people were moved from cellars, doss-houses and barracks. Most of them were owned by the Moscow Soviet and administered by salaried house managers or by elected committees responsible to the tenants. Since living in such conditions, involving the sharing of kitchens and bathrooms and of a common corridor, inevitably gave rise to all kinds of stresses and strains, the Moscovites worked out many ingenious and extremely human devices to bring pressure on recalcitrant tenants, including honour courts, and the forming of sub-committees to assist in house-management.

From an early age a Soviet citizen brought up in these circumstances grew accustomed to obey and, in most cases, to respect the discipline imposed by society for the common good. Many a Moscow child had its first lesson in civics in the corridor of its own home. The citizen, living in these conditions, was constantly being called on to take part in co-operative action.

Sometimes the original tenants of these middle-class apartments remain in occupation of a modest share. One of my acquaintances, an old lady with a famous name, lives in a two-room basement of the mansion her father built. Another still has the satisfaction of letting himself into his family home where he occupies a small room.

The old wooden houses of Moscow are rapidly disappearing and with them some of the quaintness of a city which up to 15 years ago retained much of the typically urban-rural air of a Russian city. The extension of the city limits however has brought a number of hamlets under the authority of the Moscow Soviet. Perched two or three feet above the level of the ground, with elaborately fretted woodwork around their windows, one never exactly like the other, cottages of a type in which Russians have lived since their history was recorded, press to the verge of Moscow. Fifty years ago three out of four of the city's houses were wooden and over a half of all buildings single-storey.

Considerable care is being taken by the city authorities to preserve the other type of old Moscow house, the two-storey stucco-fronted buildings that date from the first half of the 19th century, closely linked in style with the public buildings and small palaces built during the Moscow *Empire* period. The city architects have wide powers of control over the decoration of these buildings and since the war have used them admirably to knit together the city-scape by a co-ordinated treatment of the facades of these buildings. Restored in ochre and white they form an architectural

unity which it is to be hoped the Moscow Soviet will not sacrifice in the course of the city's reconstruction. The latest small house construction in Moscow suggests that architects are seeking to establish a link with the sound traditions of early nineteenth century Russian architecture.

It was not until late in the 1920's that serious attention was turned to the problem of providing new housing in Moscow, coincident with the growth of the industrial population during the first Five-Year Plan. The large blocks of flats, usually five or six stories high, built between 1928 and 1932 showed signs of hasty and economical construction, with their unpointed brick exteriors which should have been, but never were, coated with plaster, their crude architectural forms. The authorities could justly claim that the workers who crowded into the two or three room apartments, usually one family to each room, were living under far healthier conditions than those of the barracks and basements of pre-Revolution time. They could point to the fact that electric light was universal in these new blocks, that most were centrally heated, that rents were conspicuously low. Especially, they could claim that they were concentrating first on providing homes for the lower-paid workers. But there was no gainsaying that these early ventures in large scale housing were drab and dreary.

By 1936 standards were considerably higher. For three or four years there had been no appreciable increase in the population of Moscow and during that time over 1 million square metres of new housing had been finished, an improvement which was reflected in a change of the Moscow Soviet's policy. Henceforth the practice of encouraging the sharing of apartments was virtually abandoned, new flats being let to single families. From that time until the outbreak of war, there were, in practice, two standards of Moscow housing—that reached and held in new housing, where one family occupied an apartment, and that in older buildings

where there was little if any relief of the problem of overcrowding. It constituted a temporary unevenness that the authorities were willing to tolerate only, it seems, because they were confident that the general housing situation was rapidly improving. The war, however, dashed their hopes. The unevenness persists to this day.

One of its causes is the practice by which ministries, factories, and various other organisations and departments build and administer their own blocks of apartments. Over a million Moscovites occupy homes that belong to this category, homes that go with the job and are usually retained by pensioned-off workers. This permits of a good deal of variation in housing standards according to the controlling organisation. The type of home offered in a contract is frequently one of the most important incentives to new labour.

Moscow's post-war plan envisages the addition of 3 million square metres of housing to the 18 million of 1945. This compares with the 4.9 million square metres built between 1923 and 1935. But although standards are higher now than at a period when the authorities were mainly concerned in housing the lower-paid workers, and although much labour and material will continue to be absorbed by repair-work, the task that the City Council has set should not be beyond the building-trades' powers. Mechanized methods of construction are widely applied; 85% of excavation is done by machines; time-saving devices such as the building of interiors simultaneously with the outer walls have been introduced more generally. There is no predictable cause why Moscow should not continue to build houses at a constantly increasing pace until her housing problem is solved, though the most sanguine do not expect that to be before another twenty years. New houses are still required for at least two-thirds of the city's population.

The period that has passed since the end of the war has

shown that while the Moscow Soviet intends to hold to its declared purpose of making a decent standard of housing available to every family, the requirements of higher-paid workers and intellectuals are being met first. This is fully in line with the principles governing Soviet practice today. Nevertheless the question that many who live in crowded conditions ask themselves is, whether these differences in housing standards are to be perpetuated in Soviet society or whether they are a temporary feature?

It is perhaps too early to seek for a full answer to this question in the plans that are being fulfilled at present but evidence that the authorities intend to keep faith with the lower-paid category of workers would seem to be provided by the vigorous manner in which public works schemes beneficial to all are being pushed through. The extension of the Metro to serve districts inhabited by some two and a half million people, and the bringing of natural gas by pipe line from Saratov, 840 kilometres away, a bold enterprise which is providing a further 200,000 Moscow apartments with gas for cooking, are measures aimed at raising the minimum living-standard which will greatly ease the lives of the average citizen. Already the vital problem of keeping Moscow homes warm in winter has been taken out of the hands of individual tenants. During the winter 1947-1948 the responsibility of maintaining temperatures in occupied buildings at 18°C. (65°F.) was placed on house-managers. It was their job to see that the necessary fuel was available. Simultaneously with the construction of large apartment houses, the authorities have made large grants for the repair of older buildings, while an important place in the Moscow plan is reserved for workers' apartment houses on the outskirts of the city to replace the barrack-type buildings which were hastily constructed during the period of emergency fifteen to twenty years ago. Moscow is justifiably ashamed of the living standards in such places,

to which disapproving reference is frequently made in the local press.

At the beginning of 1948 Moscow city authorities promised that housing construction was to be twice as great that year as in 1947 and during March the Government took the decision of starting work on a new home for Moscow University, situated on the Sparrow (Lenin) Hills, the prominent height in the South West part of Moscow which had been earmarked in the City Plan for buildings of a non-industrial character. According to the plans there is to be accommodation for over 6,000 students and professors in a huge, air-conditioned building which will also contain most of the laboratories and lecture rooms required for the modern side of the University. Each student is to have his own furnished room and the standards that have been set are certainly not below those to which students are accustomed in America or Western Europe. An area of about 250 acres of the best building site in Moscow has been allotted for this purpose and the architectural team created before the war to work on the Palace of Soviets project has been commissioned to design a university which will be in keeping with other major buildings of the city. The project which is scheduled to be completed in 1952 and which is the most ambitious construction job undertaken in Moscow since the building of the Metro, was announced at a time when, it seemed to the Russians, war hysteria in Western Europe and America had reached new heights. It also coincided with the beginning of a movement in current architectural taste away from the neo-classic standards made fashionable by Zholtovsky.

As a result of these changes Moscow is no longer the largest village in the world as its inhabitants were fond of describing it twenty five years ago, though there are still single storey buildings within a quarter of a mile of the Kremlin and sheep are still occasionally driven through the

Red Square. Gone from the central part of the city are the wooden houses that appeared to have been lifted bodily from the country, with fenced gardens, stables and imposing gateways. Most of the dilapidated buildings which used to stand with the utmost composure alongside gaudy merchant palaces or delicately restrained examples of the Moscow *Empire* style, giving the capital its special character of a city that has grown haphazardly through the centuries, have been demolished, tugged into line or rebuilt. For the first time in its history Moscow is being given some semblance of street architecture, though even in these days of central direction and committee rule, a certain wilfulness in the character of this lively city asserts itself and produces incongruous effects which only the purist will regret. The city architects are still groping for a style, with little in Russian tradition to serve as guide since most of their land's cities are of recent growth. Seventy years ago, European Russia had only 11 towns of more than 50,000 inhabitants. Forty years later there were 35. In 1939 the same area had 12 cities of more than 400,000 inhabitants, over 50 with more than 100,000.

Moscow, however, does not lie wholly at the mercy of its architects. There is an old saying that there is nothing above the Kremlin except heaven, and in one sense its truth is incontrovertible even by Marxists, for it is the unfiltered purity of the light that floods on to the city from the skies that contributes most to its character. Though Moscow is a great industrial centre producing one seventh of the nation's entire output of manufactured goods—about twenty times more than before the Revolution and twice as much as all Tsarist Russia—its atmosphere is remarkably free from impurities. How much its citizens owe to the sky every dull day reminds them. Then the city is painted a monotonous grey relieved only by the occasional gleam of a gilded cupola or the glow of a red flag. The plastered facades of

its buildings look as if they had been turned to sponge. Moscow becomes sullen. Its voice, never as high pitched as the voices of most European cities, drops to a mutter. New buildings lose their gloss and the weather-beaten walls of the Kremlin and the battlemented monasteries cease to glow. But when the sun shines Moscow is transformed. In summer, "when all the chequer'd sky is one bright glare," a lambent, generous light floods the broad streets, a feeling of spaciousness is created similar to that associated with the broad Russian steppe and the spirit rises above the little miseries of daily life. In winter it is as though a lustre-glaze had been spread over the city. The gleaming spears of icicles, the polish on the trodden snow that lies in Moscow four days out of nine during the year, the shimmer of furs, and then, in the afterglow, the chisel-cut silhouette of domes and towers against the serene sky towards which thick puffy white columns of steam gradually rise—this is the Moscow to be remembered by all who have watched its course through the seasons. It has no Spring, only a dragging protracted death of Winter, followed by a brief, violent melodrama; and Winter succeeds Summer with the suddenness of a transformation scene in the Bolshoi Theatre.

In a city whose climate is characterized by such extremes —the temperature sometimes drops to -44°F. (-40C.) and may rise in summer to 99°F. (37°C.)—it is, at first sight, surprising to find that the Moscovites retain their reserved and impassive stolidity in all conditions. Even on the brightest days it is left to the children to add the overtones to the low-pitched hum of Moscow life. For a city so packed with inhabitants, the streets are astonishingly quiet, and anyone used to the throb of London, the shrill voices of Paris or Prague, or the happy murmur of the cities of Scandinavia, is likely to be puzzled by the atmosphere of solemnity, melancholy or even anxiety that seems to brood over Moscow. Even the railway-stations, of all places

usually the liveliest, have a peculiar calm in Moscow with the muffled hoot of the locomotives, the slow shuffling walk of the porters, penguin-like in their black and white uniforms, and the subdued voices of the passengers. But though the reserve of the inhabitants of Russian cities in public places has been noted by travellers for centuries, in contemporary Moscow it may reasonably be attributed to the fact that this is, first and foremost, a working-class city whose people are fully occupied in arduous toil and for whom leisure is primarily a time for physical rest. The easing of conditions since the end of the war has already brought a marked change and it is probably that further improvement will be reflected in the mood with which people go about their business in the streets of Moscow.

That they are capable of letting themselves go in public is shown every May-day when in a combination of solemn ceremony and carnival they hail the brotherhood of the working people and the approach of summer. Soon after dawn the demonstrators assemble at places where until recently the old gates of the Inner City stood. The festive note is struck at the very beginning, for while waiting their turn to stream through the Red Square the people sing and dance to the accompaniment of accordeon music. Family scenes are much in evidence for it is now customary to bring children and even *babushkas* on these popular treks which are carried out in an atmosphere of cheerfulness and relaxed good humour. Watched from the tribunes of the Red Square the demonstration is an overwhelmingly powerful manifestation of mass solidarity, but the observer will learn more of the ordinary Russian folk and their feelings towards their capital city if he will join one of the groups. He is certain to find a welcome, for however sharply the Soviet press may campaign against foreign governments, the Russian people always retain a place in their hearts for those who join them in their moments of joy or sorrow.

If, then, after the impressive, well-rehearsed military parade in a Red Square glowing with gold and crimson, you were to join the demonstrators and get a worker's-eye-view of Moscow *en fete* several things would probably strike you as unusual. First, this procession is unlike any other because it includes everybody. There are, practically speaking, no spectators outside the Red Square. You would be struck, too, by the unwonted merriment of the participants, by the absence of policemen to direct their movements, and by the lack of any sort of regimentation. Then there is a note of dignity which is usually absent from civic demonstrations of this kind, perhaps because of the simplicity of decoration, restricted in colouring to red and white, and in subject to Communist slogans and the portraits of Lenin, Stalin and members of the Politbureau. You would find that the workers were at ease in the centre of their city, impressed no doubt by its spick-and-span appearance but pleased to find that it neither frowned on them as intruders or sought to tempt them into extravagances. The entertainment lavishly provided in the evening is free and food is on sale at the same prices charged in the suburban shops. Moscow smiles on its citizens benevolently on such days and their response to this civic free-for-all is uninhibited. A form of celebration has been devised which owes nothing to trans-Atlantic tin-can civilisation, and which is entirely free from commercialised vulgarity, or pomp and circumstance, so that dragging one's feet home in the dawn, it is with a feeling of having taken part in something that is essentially healthy, joyful and original that one says goodbye to another First of May.

Only one barrier remains uplifted to the people. The Kremlin, a city within a city, undecorated save by myriads of electric lights that outline its bastions and crenellated walls, stands aloof from the celebrations. The nation's leaders come out from it through the Gate of the Redeemer,

to take the greetings of the people from the terrace of the Lenin Mausoleum, as Russia's leaders have come to the Red Square for centuries; but no crowds follow them back. The bells that hang in its tall church towers are silent and the only sound the Kremlin contributes to the evening's celebrations is the crash of its guns. To the masses the Kremlin remains an unapproachable conglomerate of tightly packed cupolas and high towers, of stuccoed palaces and barracks. The tall fifteenth century walls of red brick with their nineteen watch towers hide the broad lawns and spacious squares that lie within. It is these tremendously massive walls, built on the site of the wooden palisade that 800 years ago the Russians built to enclose the new city on the banks of the Moskva river, which bar the hubbub of Moscow from penetrating to the place where the Soviet Government as well as the legislative organs are now located. The silence within is the most lasting impression this writer retains after several visits.

If you are permitted to attend a meeting of the Supreme Soviet you enter by the Trinity Gate. You pass the armoury and what used to be the Tsar's apartments, go under the Winter Garden and reach a courtyard behind the Great Palace, built one hundred years ago during the reign of Nicholas the First. Gone are the times when many thousands of ordinary Moscow citizens lived in the Kremlin walls, when children played on the trophy cannon, and wives or sweethearts brought luncheon packages to the lolling sentries. Gone too are many of the Imperial trappings of the Great Palace. The vestibule you enter is austerely modern, a lift carries you to the entrance of the Great Hall of the Supreme Soviet which with its white walls, its pale yellow curtains, its neatly ranged benches in plain style, has an impressive simplicity that imposes itself on the proceedings that take place there. In such setting it seems quite proper that Stalin should slip into his seat behind the rostrum

without ceremony, and that the Supreme Soviet should get through its business in the style of a well-conducted board meeting. The efficiency, the up-to-dateness, and clock-work punctuality with which the Kremlin works is held up before all Soviet administrators as a model; " Po-Kremliov-sky "—in the Kremlin manner—is a phrase one often hears in Soviet offices.

Very different is the atmosphere in the older parts of this palace-fortress. If you cross the Cathedral Square, passing close to where most of the Tsars of Imperial Russia are buried in surroundings that have recently been restored to their former splendour, and enter the low-vaulted apart-ments of Ivan Grozny, you feel century after century of Russia's history sweeping past you. The mind goes back beyond Peter the Great to the days when Mongols and Poles battered at the walls of the Kremlin and when webs of intrigue were woven in secret rooms by ambitious Boyars.

The ordinary life of Moscow goes on at the very walls of the Kremlin. Children play and diplomats learn to ski in the Alexandrovsky Park near the Borovitsky Gate through which Napoleon entered the deserted Kremlin. At Christ-mas time a miniature fairy-tale village is built not far away. The gardens beside the meandering Moskva river are a favourite haunt of lovers. Gradually, however, as Moscow is being rebuilt the centre seems to be shifting towards the home of the Moscow Soviet on the Gorky Street, and it is outside this building and not in the Kremlin that the monu-ment to the founder of Moscow, Yuri Dolgoruki is being erected. The demolition of acres of small buildings that until the 1930's used to cover the Manege Square has tended to accentuate the Kremlin's isolation in contemporary Moscow. Only on national holidays do the people, as if drawn by some deep-rooted instinct, swarm around it and look towards it with expectation.

Moscow, the saying goes, is mother to some and step-

mother to others. Since it began to expand into the Soviet capital this has become increasingly characteristic of Moscow. Its natives must be far outnumbered by those who have been drawn there during the past two decades from all over the Union; though with a limit fixed on its growth this situation will soon change. It is said that to hear Russian spoken with the real Moscow accent you have to go into the villages. A large proportion of the new-comers are strangers to town-life and it is not to be expected that they should take to it easily at first. As the city itself is being re-shaped so are its citizens' habits, but several decades will have to pass before people become fully accustomed to an urban existence and attach themselves to the city with those infinite small personal ties that bind a man to the bricks and stones of the place where he was born or has grown to love. As far as they can, the city authorities are encouraging this growth of civic pride; the 1947 celebrations of Moscow's eight hundredth birthday were a notable step in this campaign, the peculiar significance of which cannot easily be grasped by the Parisian or Prazak or even by the Londoner. As in all campaigns to popularise history, the Moscovite was induced to look back only so as to be able to look into the future with a surer, more penetrating gaze. City authorities in other lands faced with the problems of mobilising popular support for their long-range development plans and of giving their citizens a more complete understanding of the factors limiting the provision of housing, might learn much from Moscow in this respect. The fostering of an intelligent awareness of one's surroundings is considered a prerequisite to good citizenship in the Soviet Union.

The street-scene reflects the restlessness of this city-in-the-making. From morning until late at night a constant human stream hustles along the principle streets. One has only to dawdle before one begins to feel conspicuous, even anti-social; it is as impossible to stroll on many a broad-

pavemented Moscow street as it is in London's Threadneedle Street at noon. Clerks in shiny leather coats; officials in dark blue overcoats with karakaul collars, brief-cases under their arms; men in greasy sheepskin coats; women in felt boots fitted with enormous goloshes; officers with the hats of potentates; street-urchins with shapeless quilted jackets shedding kapok; Metro-workers with bags of tools and small-holders with sacks of potatoes; neatly dressed stenographers with library books in paper-jackets under their arms; pupils from the trade-schools, arm in arm and singing the latest popular song in thirds, hustle their urgent way through Moscow. Street-trading of all kinds goes on, legal and on that shadowy fringe of the law where so much business is conducted in Russia. Ice cream sellers do a roaring trade at all seasons, wearing fur-gloves to handle their wares in winter. The cigarette dealers carry their stock in glass-topped cases and have to compete with importunate amateurs who offer open packets with an insistent patter. Gipsy girls bring early spring flowers and jars of wood-strawberries into the capital. Sunflower seeds are a popular article in these curb-side markets. Sometimes you will see a peasant with full-beard and matted hair, offering ingenious moving toys of carved wood, bears that nod, owls that flap their wings, and broods of chickens that peck when you pull a string. Since the war ended fruits from Central Asia and citrus fruits from beyond the Caucasus and huge almost transparent apples of the sort that the Sultan of Turkey used to have brought by special courier from Uzbekistan have been added to the range of merchandize. "One can find everything in Moscow, except pigeon's milk." . . .

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The importance of retaining Moscow's "Historic outline" has been stressed in all Soviet plans for the development of the capital. The more assiduous the search for what is valuable in their past, the greater the care that has been expended on preserving the best examples of Russian architecture that the city has to offer. Moreover, a deliberate attempt is being made, though not as yet very successfully, to establish a link between contemporary building and the dominant style of Moscow's best period, roughly the years 1775-1830. Soviet architectural taste has been severely criticised over the past fifteen years especially by those who had hoped to see a new Moscow arise in a severely functional style. But, with all their faults, credit is due to the architects for the manner in which, while building a new city, they are gradually restoring to its finest buildings the position they held before the tasteless development of the late nineteenth century.

They are faced with considerable difficulties. Although various attempts at town-planning were made, originally with the aim of making the Kremlin visible from all quarters of the city, and later of converting the obsolete fortifications into circular highways, the rich landowners had never conformed to plan in the placing of their mansions. Probably because the city has few outstanding natural features and because during the 18th century a series of decrees expelled small landowners from the Inner City and granted extensive privileges to the wealthy who were able to acquire considerable estates there, the Moscow nobleman had palaces built that appeared to have been transplanted directly from the country. Sites were chosen with care so that buildings should face South or West; local topographical features were respected; some pleasing ensembles were created. But architects showed as little concern for the architectural outline of the city of Moscow as they would have done for the local village had they been

building a country mansion. The result of this irregularity was a fortuitous collection of splendid palaces, closely linked in architectural style but in nothing else. While their extensive gardens were preserved intact the effect was no doubt admirable, but as land values rose during the 19th century and aristocratic fortunes passed into the hands of the rising merchant class, these gardens were reduced and it was not long before the city was pressing up to the very doors of the mansions.

With the Revolution they became the property of the Moscow Soviet, and for the most part were converted into ministries, clinics, institutes, clubs, public libraries. The process of deterioration was not immediately halted. Only the beneficient influence of Anatoli Lunarcharsky, the Commissar for Enlightenment, saved some of them from serious mutilation. But from the time of the launching of the plans for developing Moscow increasing attention has been paid to preserving Moscow's architectural heritage. In the post-war period the tendency has become especially marked. In spite of the stringencies of the times, care has been lavished on the repair of the masterpieces of Kazakov, Bazhenov, Beauvais, Gillardi and other architects of the Russian classical and Moscow *Empire* schools. This attitude is going to have an important effect on the appearance of the Moscow of the future. The dominant colouring of Moscow's palaces has already set the tone for the city as a whole. Their warm yellow facades with columns, medallions and swags in chalk-white derive no doubt from country practice, which long ago chose these colours as the most effective in the setting of the Central Russian Plain, the land of golden grain, green grass, blue skies and white-trunked birch trees.

Their sober use of detail serves as a useful reminder that Baroque extravagance is misplaced in Moscow, and if the city architects can get it into their heads that there are

other ways of being true to the tradition of Russian classicism than using decorative pillars on every possible occasion, they will find many features in the architecture of the palaces that can be adapted to modern apartment house building. The Moscow spirit does not take kindly to extreme regularity in building. The only two regions of the city which conform to this standard were built specifically to house Germans and Poles. To judge from what has already been accomplished, the Moscow that is envisaged for the future will consist of an assemblage of regions each with strongly marked local character, linked by the firm lines of the general plan. The city's palaces provide the lesson that a regional development of this nature need not produce a hotch-potch of styles.

Let us, before reaching the end of this chapter, pay a few visits to that Moscow of the past, which, I have suggested, is coming to mean so much more to present-day Moscovites. It will help us to understand with what clamouring and sometimes contradictory voices the city is calling to its inhabitants, most of whom have yet to become familiar with it. Exploration is not easy, for there are no adequate guide-books and streets and whole districts have changed their names since most of the places we are in search of were built. Nor is it always easy to convince a watchman that you are gazing at a public building for no other reason than to admire its architecture.

Crossing the courtyard of the huge and somewhat forbidding Government House that faces the Kremlin's Trinity Gate from across the Moskva river, we find the most interesting example of early domestic architecture that Moscow has to offer, the Palace of Averki Kirillov, built in the middle of the 17th century for a Moscow boyar. With its own private church and extensive buildings for courtiers, its flamboyant use of decorative elements that, though executed in brick and stone, obviously derive from Russian traditions in the handling of timber, its short squat bulging

columns and prodigal use of elaborate frames for its tiny fortress-windows, this palace is essentially Moscovite. But it belongs to a period when the purely Russian style was singing its swan song. Forty years later Western European influences were to come into play. Moscow has nothing very interesting in domestic building to offer for almost another century. Peter the Great's visit to Paris had acquainted him with the prevailing trend towards building palaces and court-mansions away from the metropolis. We should have to make a fairly long journey from the centre of Moscow to Lefortovo in the outskirts to find examples of early 18th century building. The construction of Saint Petersburg practically paralyzed new construction in the old capital except for military purposes or to record in grandiose manner the Tsar's victories on the battlefield. However, the way was being prepared for the flood of new mansions that was to come later in the century. One of the first new constructions to arise in the newly cleared areas was the handsome Baroque palace built under the supervision of Rastrelli for Count Razoumovsky. We find it today in the upper part of the Chernyshevsky Street, wearing the coat of bright blue it was given for the thirtieth anniversary of the Revolution.

Moscow is specially rich in buildings that date from the last quarter of the 18th century, a period dominated by the titanic and stormy genius of Vasilii Ivanovich Bazhenov and the original and gifted Kazakov. It is in a building designed by the latter, the serenely classical district courthouse in the Kremlin, that the Soviet Council of Ministers has its seat. It was Kazakov who designed the Moscow University —though it has been given an *Empire* facade since then— the former Golitsin hospital, now the First Municipal Clinical Hospital on the Bolshaya Kaluzhshaya street, and the Nobles' Assembly Rooms, now the House of the Unions.

Bazhenov's influence on Moscow architecture was to be

exercised more through his projects than through completed work, for his astonishing gifts were wasted by his imperial patron, the Empress Catherine. But today, we can study his style in the Yauzskaya Hospital, formerly Batashev House, in the old wing of the Lenin Library, formerly Pashkov House, in Yushkov House at 21, Kirov Street, in Prozorovsky House on the corner of Bolshaya Polianka and the Canal, and in the exquisite Dolgov House on 1st Meshchanskaya. We may notice that almost all these fine examples of the Russian classical style, and many others, too, including the line of noblemen's palaces, above the Moskva River, as it curves at the foot of the Sparrow Hills, now housing branches of the Academy of Sciences, are being used as public buildings. It is much the same with the Moscow *Empire* style buildings, erected after the Napoleonic Wars and the burning of the city. A walk along the Tverski and Nikitski Boulevards will show us that most of the mansions designed by Gillardi, Beauvais, Grigoriev and other eminent architects of the period are now used in public service. The former English Club on the Gorky Street is now the Museum of the Revolution, Gillardi's Lunin House has become a children's art school; and the mansion he built for Prince Gagarin on the banks of the Yauza is a sanatorium for consumptives. No small part in forming the architectural taste of the present inhabitants of Moscow is being played by these dignified old homes in which so many public activities now take place, and it is not too far-fetched to assume that familiarity with such buildings is having some effect on Russian social behaviour. Their formal lay-out sets a pattern for public ceremony which is repeated in humbler surroundings. Ask a Russian what his architectural preferences are and nine times out of ten he will express a taste for columns and chandeliers, brilliant lighting and *Empire* furniture. "Futuristic" styles and the dim-lit cosiness so much in vogue elsewhere

does not appeal and the use of national motifs is likely to arouse the comment " kliukva "—the Russian equivalent of " phoney." The conversion of private mansions and palaces for general use has also been carried out in the country around Moscow, and these former summer-homes of the nobility attract many visitors. Moscow is closely beset with unspoiled woods and meadows in which the walker is free to walk unrestrained, unless he should wander into a small area on the western approaches where members of the government have their *datchas*. Transport problems and the urgent need of putting in all free time on their allotments has till now limited the Moscovites' use of this fair countryside, but already in 1947 there was a substantial increase in " hiking " while scores of thousands of school children have been taken out of the city every summer since the war to spend their holidays in parks once reserved for the better-off members of Tsarist society. Sometimes " mass picnics " are organised by factories and on such occasions a few hundred people will drive out by lorry preceded by field kitchens, set up temporary volley-ball or tennis courts, kick footballs about and dance to accordeons. The people of Moscow are not exacting when it is a question of spending their hard-earned leisure and have not yet reached that level of sophistication that requires mechanized forms of entertainment. Conversation remains the main-spring of their lives ; they enjoy nature not because it provides solitude but opportunities for social intercourse denied them in the hurly-burly of city life in present circumstances. These week-end parties are marked by the preponderance of family groups. It gives people pleasure to be able to spend their free time as they want, not as someone else settles it for them. It is mass-amusement without the tastelessness and melancholy vulgarity which so many people in the West have been forced to accept by the insidious influence of the cinema and the radio.

Most of these estates around Moscow were created between two and three hundred years ago by governments that were anxious to protect Moscow from invaders. Representatives of the families of Streshnev, Mstislav, Golitsin, Sheremetiev, Morosov and others thus received parcels of land on which as the dangers of war receded their successors often built fine mansions. Such a place is the Palace of Arkhangielsk of which the 18th century historian Karamzin wrote that it would surprise " even an English lord." Its original owner Golitsin sold it to N. B. Yusupov 160 years ago, and it was this widely travelled and cultured man, to whom the Leningrad Hermitage owes many of its finest statues, who had built the noble mansion that has now passed to the Soviet Army as a rest home for its officers. Like many of the noblemen's mansions outside Moscow the execution of the architect's plans was left to local craftsmen trained in workshops attached to the estate and the discerning visitor will find a certain amateurishness which only the purist will complain about. It is in the grounds of such great houses, usually kept intact, that the workers of Moscow and their families have rested during the post-war period. Is it not possible that the intimate charm of Seredinkovo and Liublino, the majestic beauty of the monuments of Kuzminki and Ostafieva, and the noble stonework of Alabino and Glinka have had some influence on their impressionable minds, and that the constant assertion of high aesthetic standards may be forming a taste that will reject the trashy vulgarity so frequently associated with entertainment for the masses in other countries ?

Chapter Seven

HOW MOSCOW LIVES TODAY

WHAT standards of comparison are we to use when we come to examine the way the Russian people are living in these post-war years? Two courses are open to us. We can compare conditions in the Soviet Union with those of other European countries, making due allowance for special factors, or we can examine them in a strictly Soviet or Russian setting, keeping in mind the declared intentions of the present regime. The first method of approach has the advantage of permitting the foreign reader to apply his own measuring rod. Its chief disadvantage is the temptation it offers for assuming that Soviet society is inevitably reaching towards the same ends as the capitalist world in its measures for the welfare of its members. It is all too easy to fall into the error of thinking that what appear on first sight to be shortcomings are the result of failures to reach certain standards. Closer acquaintance with the Soviet Union may disclose that those standards have been deliberately rejected as obsolete, undesirable or unworthy. Another pitfall is the tendency to overlook the fact that Russia is not the Soviet Union. If one is to apply the comparative test consistently and fairly, account must be taken of the conditions of life in Soviet Asia, in Trans-Caucasia, in the Soviet Arctic and Far East. During the first thirty years of their State's existence, the people of Russia have had to pay heavily for the tremendous programme of enlightened

development carried out in territories formerly treated as colonial. This policy is now beginning to show returns with the result that during the present series of Five-Year plans the country as a whole is likely to be drawing the benefits in more even proportions. Nevertheless a fair comparison between living standards here and elsewhere must include a study of the different levels in Soviet and in Persian Azerbaijan, in Soviet and in Chinese Mongolia, in Soviet and in Turkish Armenia and so on. The Soviet Union must be regarded as a whole since it is a single economic and political unit.

Though such comparisons lie beyond the scope of this book, it may be useful, before examining how Russians live today, to glance at some of the salient features of this ambitious attempt of the Soviet Government to smooth out the great differences that used to exist between standards of living in various parts of the Russian Empire. Take, for example, schools. In the territory now within the Russian Republic there were, in 1913, 70,000 schools with 163,000 teachers. At the end of 1947 there were 115,000 schools, 600,000 teachers. In the non-Russian parts of the Union, however, expansion has been substantially greater. In Georgia, for example, the same period saw an increase from 1,600 to 5,000 schools. In the territory formerly known as Russian Turkestan the people have been raised from a condition of complete illiteracy. In Tadzhikistan, for example, where only one person in 200 of its one million inhabitants was literate in 1913, there are today 3,000 schools attended by over 300,000 children. Before the Revolution only 2% of the Uzbek people—numbering about four million—could read or write. Today there are a million Uzbeks at school. Or take the question of medical services. Russia has increased the number of her hospital beds from 104,000 in 1913, to 192,500 in 1947, its doctors from 13,000 to 94,000. But in 1913 the Tadzhik people had no hospitals

whatsoever. Today it has 120 with 4,000 beds. The same story could be told for any of the non-European or Caucasian republics in the U.S.S.R. Since the Revolution, in short, Russia has not only foregone the contributions to its wealth by lands that used to supply it with colonial products in Tsarist times; it has also had to finance the vast investments made there for the benefit of people who irrespective of their colour, creed or history enjoy equal rights with the inhabitants of European Russia.

When one talks to Russians about the material conditions in which they are now living, their comments usually take one of three forms. If they belong to the older generation they are apt to compare present conditions with those of the time of their youth; if they are from among those who were actively engaged in the period of construction during the 1930's they will generally preface their remarks with a reference to what life might have been had there been no war; and if they are young they will express their opinions about the probable pace of future development. This classification is, of course, somewhat arbitrary. All share the conviction that a long spell of peace is a pre-requisite to any substantial improvement in their lot, for whatever views they may hold on their country's chances of emerging victorious from another war, they are as one in their belief that war brings nothing but grief, irreparable loss and bitter suffering to the masses. How could they feel otherwise, these people who have seen the flower of their land cut down and their hard won gains wiped out? There is not a man in this country who can say that his living conditions have improved as a result of the war.

The average Russian has had many worries since the war ended. He has been faced with the extreme difficulty of finding a place to live in. He has had to provide clothing and food for himself and his family in a period of acute shortage. Each of these processes has required an expendi-

ture of effort far greater than that demanded anywhere else in Europe, with the possible exception of Germany. But the effort has been forthcoming and the people have shown great powers of recovery. Their confidence in the government's ability to bring about an improvement in their standard of living has caused them to accept present hardships, if not with equanimity, then at least in a spirit of reasonableness. The way to a better life has been clearly marked and though it is very steep and blocked by many obstacles the journey is being made exciting with its abundant opportunities for initiative and courage, its vivid dramatisation of the heroism of toil, its celebrations of success on the labour front. In the Soviet view it is not enough to show people the tasks they must fulfill in order to make their lives fuller and richer; it is not enough to provide them with the tools for the job; if they are to work stoutly and in good spirits there must be drama and fun, and the waving of flags and music played and slogans more inspiring than "Backs to the Wall." There is no place in such an atmosphere of struggle and emulation for the traditional Russian, patient, long-suffering, submissive. Every device at the command of the Party and Government is used to kindle impatience, to stir people to struggle against conservatism, bureaucracy and obsolete methods of work. Complacency is the deadliest of sins. The conscientious citizen must constantly be examining his course of action in a self-critical spirit and from the struggle between the contradictory forces of the old and the new, the retrograde and the progressive, draw energy and inspiration.

Most marked during the post-war years has been the Government's policy of showing its people examples of the better conditions that lie ahead. The theory, often voiced abroad, that the Soviet people were being deliberately kept from knowing about conditions beyond their frontiers and that this ignorance was the cause of their toleration of

difficult circumstances, is today as out-of-date as the " levelling " theory, according to which all life in the U.S.S.R. was to be reduced to the level of the average. On the contrary, the differential system of rewards has resulted in there being before everybody's eyes examples of the kind of life that is theirs for the earning. The theatre, the cinema, the press publicizes standards that, without being in any way luxurious, are considerably above the average. And as long as the public remains convinced that these conditions are attainable and that those who enjoy them have earned the right to do so by their own labour, there will be no envy. The mentality of the Soviet public is such, one must always remember, that nothing can shake the belief that in the material sense life is constantly improving and that the harder and more skilfully the citizen works the greater will be his reward. They have not been disappointed in the past and they have few doubts about the future. An inestimably valuable contribution to their present morale is made by their experiences in the 1930's when conditions were improving by leaps and bounds. There is nothing in the memory of the Soviet factory-worker comparable with those bitter experiences that millions of working men and women in other lands went through between 1930 and the outbreak of the war, and which have left so extensive a legacy of distrust, cynicism and caution among the labouring masses of countries that permitted general unemployment to bring progress to a halt. In contrast to the hostility to factory work with which millions of families in such lands has been impregnated as a result of short-time, uncertainty of employment, and all-pervading poverty, the Russian sees his children pass through the red-bannered factory gates on their way to the technical school with the feeling that they have set out on a life with opportunities galore, with windows and doors bursting open on new worlds.

The increasing pace of advancement in most fields of

Soviet activity, an important factor in the formation of morale, may be observed on all sides. Consider for example the case of a few workers in the metallurgical factory of Verkh-Isetsk, one of those old iron and steel mills of the Urals which have been greatly developed in Soviet times. Vasili Oborin, now in his middle forties, followed his father Foti into the works in 1922. The father, who was illiterate, remained forty years without qualifications, leaving the furnaces with the same grade with which he entered, though he was, according to his son, a man of natural intelligence and considerable ability. During the first twenty years of employment Vasili Oborin finished several courses of training, the technical minimum, the Stakhanovite course and finally the master's course, and in 1944 reached the top grade of steel-master. He is still studying, but now his subjects are those which he would have learned had he remained at school after the age of 14, for he is in the seventh form of the works' adult educational school. In contrast with his father, who never left his home town and who never had a holiday, Vasili Oborin has seen many parts of the Soviet Union and has spent vacations in Pyatigorsk in the Caucasian mountains.

Working with Oborin in the metal shops are two men, Ivan Alexandrovich Liovkin, and Nikolai Cherny. Liovkin entered the factory in 1937 and his advancement has been swifter than his master's. He, too took the three courses open to workers in this factory and after only four years work had acquired all the qualifications necessary for the profession of rolling-mill operator. Today he is in charge of a mill which broke all previous records and his portrait hangs in the factory club as a local hero of labour. His average monthly wage is 4,250 roubles.

Still more rapid was the success of those workers who entered the factory during the last five years. Nikolai Cherny came to work at the sheet-rolling mill in 1942 and

was a member of Liovkin's brigade. In three years he was a foreman and in November 1947 he broke Liovkin's record. He is earning 3,000 roubles a month. Cherny is a typical representative of the young generation of Soviet metal-workers. He finished seven grades at school, then entered the Verkh-Isetski factory school from which he passed to a job already qualified, took the course of Masters of Socialist Labour and became a foreman at the age of 21. Meanwhile he continued his general education at the adult education school and is now in the ninth grade. He plans to finish his secondary education and then to take a correspondence course at the technical institute. He is described as well-read, a musician and a frequent visitor to the theatre. There is no position in the Soviet state to which the way is barred to this young worker, for with its highly developed system of adult education, no child leaving school at fourteen or fifteen to take technical training need feel that he is handicapping himself for advancement in other directions. The cultural amenities of the region are no less available to workers than to the intelligentsia, for in addition to the activities of its own club, the factory at Verkh-Isetski holds season tickets for every performance at the local theatres and concert halls. Hard as their living conditions are in the post-war period—and the Urals have suffered severely from housing shortage and hunger—the workers of this factory cannot fail to be encouraged by the ample opportunities to better themselves, materially and culturally.

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The district of Moscow in which I have lived for the past five years lies on the edge of the inner city. Here most of the side streets run either on the A-boulevard, whose gardens girdle Old Moscow or into the thronged, noisy

winding streets that radiate from the precincts of the Kremlin. A hundred years ago this district must have had a well defined character, with its dozen large mansions irregularly spaced on the slopes that run gently down to the river Yauza, its prosperous monastery and imposing barracks. Its main street, the Moroseika, was once the principle route from the Kremlin to the Imperial summer palace at Ismailovo and one can still find there a few tradesmens' houses where the desire to impress the nobility took the form of imitation in miniature of their classical palaces. But long before the Revolution the older buildings of this district had been hemmed in by others and only one garden was saved from encroachment.

Today, it is a typical segment of Soviet Moscow, packed with incongruous examples of the multiformity of the system, throbbing with life but not yet having acquired a distinctive life of its own, part of a great city but not yet completely urbanized. The old and the new jostle each other but do not compete and gradually life of a new character is emerging which has features of each. The floridly decorated house that used to be a brothel is now a consultative clinic for women and a large part of the slum district described in Maxim Gorky's *Lower Depths* has been cleared and, fittingly, has provided space for the headquarters of the Physical Culture Institute. Two monumental groups of athletes now mark the place which formerly was the entrance to a hive of courts and alleys frequented by thieves, informers and fifty copeck prostitutes.

For a long time I used to wonder why one of the stations on the tram line in this district was called *The School*, why this particular roadside school, no different in its plain cleancut appearance from any of the 375 new schools built between 1935-39, should be singled out in this way. Then I learned that where the school now stands used to be the Khitrov Market, a notorious gathering place of petty

criminals and receivers, named after a merchant who made his fortune from lodging houses where no documents were asked for, and from the bribes paid by men on the run as well as from the police in search of them. No district of Moscow had so many churches as this disreputable area, and now we have more schools and public welfare institutions than any other part of the city. Some of the churches have been converted into workshops, others are inhabited. One of the finest of them is now a Museum of Eastern Culture, containing below its slender Byzantine cross that triumphs over the humbled Crescent, Moscow's best collection of Moslem art. But there are other churches, Russian Orthodox and Baptist, where services are still conducted. Every weekend at the Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, the old incumbent performs the elaborate ritual of a collective christening. The mosaic in the low vaulted roof gleams in the wavering light of tapers, a nun busies herself with a thermometer and helps parents with the frequent undressing of the infants required by this ceremony, with its total immersion, anointment with oil and myrrh and the blessing of all the bodily organs. " Use them bravely and patriotically " the priest prays as he intercedes for the infant Christians.

Some of the former mansions have been converted into apartment houses and have a seedy, run-down look, but others are preserved as public buildings, housing ministries and headquarters of some of the non-Russian groups in Moscow. The Kremlin garrison occupies the barracks. They wear the uniform of the Soviet army but they return to barracks every evening to the strains of a march of a famous Tsarist regiment. The district's only large private garden has become a children's park, converging point for straggling caterpillars of infants from the kindergartens. In summer time a noise like the passage of a flight of starlings rises from the park. In winter, bundled up into cocoon

shapes, faces framed in furs, the infants play tight-lipped and serious in the snow. Peasant women still bring dairy produce round from door to door, and stay to drink tea in the kitchens and gossip about life in the village, but now they will tell you with pride that their sons live near the Tverski boulevard and that there is always a bed for them in Moscow.

At the end of the war you could wander freely from court to court in our district, and the children made short cuts to school through the backgardens. That was because during the air raids all the fences were taken down to facilitate the wardens and fire-fighters, and during the first two winters of the war all outhouses were torn down and burned as firewood. Now we are more orderly again but the children still remember the good places for football and no janitor is able to keep them away. During the war two of the schools nearby were requisitioned by the army, one for a hospital, the other for training girls to work in the Red Army's communications units. Now they are schools again. An old factory which was turning out standard sets of army underwear is now a technical school where boys and girls of fifteen upwards study printing. They wear a plain dark blue uniform and sing in chorus on their way back from work. Sometimes they look through my windows, shout " bourgeois," and run off laughing, and sometimes they stop and talk about the farms near Smolensk where some of them come from and about how hard it was at first to get used to eating less bread and to having so much meat and " compote," and about the soft beds they have in their dormitories " with a change of linen every week."

Until 1946 many of the side streets were partly blocked during the autumn and early winter with big wood-piles. People came with handcarts and sledges and waited for hours to buy fire-wood against vouchers issued by the places where they worked. But now gas has been laid on in most of the houses and coal is delivered to each block and distribu-

ted through the house-managers. Our local metro station was closed during the war. The rumour ran that it was used to shelter a secret department. It reopened soon after the war ended. But the biggest improvement is the increase in the number of shops and the opening of new co-operative stores, where articles can be bought that simply disappeared from circulation during the war, simple necessary things like saucepans and pots of paint and electric flex.

This gradual amelioration of living conditions is reflected in the spirits of our neighbours, ordinary Russian folk on whom the humble tasks of everyday life press heavily. I have made a practice of attending small pre-election meetings on each of the three occasions since the war when the public has been called on to express its confidence in the regime. These elections to the Supreme, to the Russian and finally to the local Soviets or Councils were preceded with intensive campaigns which generally took the form of civic education. Agitators, usually young and always well-versed in the details of the government's programme, canvassed individuals and also arranged meetings generally composed of a handful of people from one house. In contrast to the speeches at the rare large-scale public meetings that took place on such occasions, and which followed the usual Soviet practice of confining public meetings to an endorsement of decisions reached in restricted session, there was much lively discussion at these small gatherings. With few exceptions the form it took on the occasions I attended them was a search for information about the pace of improvement. I remember one questioner, a middle-aged factory worker, for whom the transition from socialism to communism was a question of the relative abundance of boots under communism asked shrewdly " In all sizes ? " ; to which the speaker with a glance at the workman's enormous feet replied affirmatively though with the jocular

aside, " Of course, we hope that when we attain Communism there won't be many people with feet as big as yours." Often the meetings would consist of talks about the Moscow development plan, about the progress of the housing programme. The canvassers make an effort to illustrate the policy they are advocating in terms of everyday life, and are generally successful in avoiding the use of terms beyond the understanding of the ordinary citizen.

Let us call on some of the people of this district in their homes. Walking is uncomfortable in our streets this summer, three and a half years after the war, for Moscow has been stormed by builders. Scarcely a street off the boulevard where one does not have to dodge the scaffolding, and thread one's way through obstacles set up by road repairing gangs, painters, sand-blasters, sappers. Here gas pipes are being laid, here a telephone cable cut during the war is being restored. The next street is temporarily closed while an old house is having three new stories added. Five women in huge fireproof gloves are laying asphalt. As usual a small crowd watches them as they heat, spread and roll down the asphalt. An old woman appears with a pot of fried meat and potatoes, bread and tomatoes wrapped in a linen cloth and hands the food to two sisters who take their breakfast on a bench in a neighbouring courtyard. There is a lake nearby. Each morning a different group of people comes to clean it and line its bank with pebbles. Professional builders, schoolgirls from the district, students from the Institute of Turf, local housewives, volunteer Komsomols—people of all sorts from the region come to help with " our lake." Among the workmen you see a typical Moscow mixture of Karelians and Tartars, Moldavians and Mordvinians, men from the Volga and men from Briansk. Everybody had come to build up Moscow as it began its ninth century of existence.

You notice a big change in peoples' appearance since the

year before. Now faces are fresh in the mornings, girls' eye-brows are trimmed and they wear ear-rings and bright scarves or soft white woollen shawls. There is enough soap, enough light and heat and time to prepare oneself for this city whose appearance, too, is changing so rapidly. It is already three years since the eleven hour working day was replaced with an 8 hour day and holidays, better nourishment and robust Russian health have restored looks that were smudged by fatigue. Now people look at their war-time identification card photographs and say " We all looked like that then, so nobody noticed it." Now there is sugar with the breakfast tea and butter with the black bread, and sometimes fresh milk, and fruit and piroshki on sale at the metro station. There are newspapers and new books to read in the buses, English technical magazines, Fadeyev's *The Young Guards*, the " thick " literary magazines, Chopin's letters.

You will find the tired people in the Polyclinic on Kirov Street, a worker from the rubber factory with varicose veins who is examined by fifteen doctors before the decision is taken to which sanatorium she is to be sent, a teacher who suffers from headaches calling for free electric treatment, an engineer who grows pale and insists that he cannot quit his job when heart disease is diagnosed and he is ordered by the doctor to take a month's rest. As you sit on old Viennese furniture in the waiting room among these people you discover that what has happened is not just that they have come to take a free medical service as something for granted but that both they and the doctors consider it part of the citizen's obligation to the state to forestall illness by preventive medicine.

The Russians never hesitate to send for the doctor or to visit a clinic if they have the slightest suspicion of illness. The younger generations of Soviet citizens are highly " health-conscious " and because it is the policy of their

doctors to make no mystery of their craft their patients acquire considerable knowledge of prophylactic measures and serve a useful social purpose in passing it on to their neighbours. This keen attitude towards the preservation of health provided the state with excellent material for its wartime measures for expanding the Red Cross.

The Soviet doctor is not only respected, he is a much loved character, perhaps because through him the state shows the kindliest aspect of its face, perhaps because it is the doctor who frequently sides with his patient in disputes with various organisations over questions of grants in money or kind, housing conditions or holidays. His reputation for self-sacrificing work and a humane approach to the problems that are constantly arising between individuals and the administration is well deserved. The celebrated Chekhov story about the doctor is known to all medical students as a picture of the dark past when doctors were humiliated by the rich and only called in by the poor when the priest was either too far away, or too lazy or too drunk to " sing the half dead off to Heaven ". Today their work is generally infused with a sense of mission and among their ranks one finds some of the loyalist citizens of the Soviet state.

Dr. K. lives in a tall, stone-built apartment house some forty years old. With his wife, who assists him at the University, and his 20 year old son, a student of Slavonic history, he shares two rooms and a small balcony which serves as a larder in winter and is just big enough to hold a couple of chairs, where it is pleasant to sit in the summer behind a screen of runner-beans. The larger room is divided by bookcases, one half serving as a bedroom for the doctor and his wife, with space for a wardrobe and a small dressing-table. The other half, nearer the window, forms the living-room. Most of the floor space is taken up with the doctor's working desk, a dining table and a number of

comfortable old-fashioned chairs. There are books everywhere and many ornaments and family photographs and a large carved box where the doctor keeps his poetry, and old letters from the time of his youth in a Kuban village. Now, at the age of 58, he is a professor of anatomy at one of Moscow's medical institutes.

On the door between the two rooms is pinned his lecture schedule and a list of telephone numbers, the gas-repairer's the electrician's, the house-committee's, the chauffeur's and the addresses of the doctor's assistants, the local library, the club of the Academy of Sciences. Moscow has no current telephone directory. The smaller second room contains two divan beds, the son's and the guest-bed, a capacious side-board where all the crockery and glass is kept and most of the food stored in boxes and bowls. This apartment is a section of a much larger one and its tenants have to share a kitchen and bathroom with several neighbours. There is a small table covered with a hand-embroidered Ukrainian cloth on which stand china and crystal ornaments, more shelves for the student's books and a wardrobe for his clothes and household linen. Old-fashioned, shabby, over-crowded, the apartment has nevertheless a comfortable homely look. It contains nothing intrinsically beautiful or valuable except, perhaps, a few old books and a Chinese statuette of an old man being healed by a potion of dew from a flower—a gift to the doctor from his students. But there is an absence of meretricious ornament or " fashionable " objects. You feel that everything it contains has been bought with circumspection and care.

The doctor received these two rooms when he first came to Moscow after graduating from a Ukrainian medical institute and only now, after almost thirty years, is there a prospect of improvement. During that period he has risen to the position of chief of a department in the Ministry of Health, as well as serving on the board of directors of a

hospital, and a sanatorium, and continuing with research work at the University. " All that with Moscow transport, mind you " he says, with a laugh, when he talks about his work. Both he and his wife were born on a Kuban farm and together they resisted their parents' wishes and went to study medicine at the town that used to be called Yekaterinodar—the Gift of Katherin—and is now known as Krasnodar. In those days the town was the scene of perpetual conflict between Cossacks and Ossetians. After the Revolution it became a symbol of the new harmony between the peoples of the North Caucasus, a city of red-roofed houses set in orchards and melon-fields with new terracotta brick schools and institutes and canning-factories. The doctor and his wife returned to Krasnodar during the first summer of peace, to rest beneath its acacias and to advise the local medical institutes how to use the material that Moscow had sent to restore the wrecked city. So for the second time in their lives they took part in the building up of the city.

The main feature about this family is the amount of work it gets through. If the doctor and his wife have to spend the day at the Institute they work at home in the evenings, often till long after midnight, and if they have a free day from lectures and committee meetings and laboratory work, they give consultations at home and work on their notes for books. They are not exceptional in this. The Soviet intelligentsia is probably the most hard-working group of people in the world. Not until the Soviet Union has advanced somewhat further along the road to prosperity will these people be able to relax, to travel abroad for international congresses, to take an interest in their homes and to share fully in those pursuits which the rest of Europe has come to consider the normal activity of its intellectuals. And while they have before them the back-breaking task of defeating poverty and want in their land, questions of personal comfort mean little to these people, who feel themselves to be engaged in a

struggle and who are as little concerned with relaxation as a good soldier is when he is driving the enemy before him. Perhaps at the back of their minds some of them cherish a secret dream of a cottage in the country, a trip to Paris, or of taking part in the musical life of the capital, but in present circumstances none but the most callous would have the effrontery to express such ideas, so insistent is the call on their skill. They are sustained by the hope that one day there will be opportunities for leisure but in just what form Soviet life will manifest itself then, they do not know, for who can tell, though the path be ever so clearly marked, what those gleaming hills ahead will reveal when one has climbed to their summit? Further heights, no doubt, but there will surely be time to draw breath once the difficult blocked paths through the swampy low country lie behind.

Not a little of the cheerfulness with which the Soviet people are tackling the prodigious difficulties of the post-war period may be attributed to the fact that change in this land of an accomplished revolution is still exciting, dramatic, complete. When measures are taken to cope with these difficulties they have a breadth that staggers but inspires. There is makeshift,—how could it be otherwise in a society plunging ahead into new forms of living?—but it is a glorious makeshift and people live with the triumphant feeling that they are on the advance. They face life realistically and for that very reason are romantic optimists.

In the K. home of 1947, shopping is done twice a week except for the bread which is brought every day or two from the local bakery, and for those things that the family prefers to get on the market. The rest comes from the "closed" scientific-workers' shop where the doctor's family is served on pre-arranged afternoons. For the shopping Mrs. K. sends the strongly built village girl who while taking courses in cookery helps with the housework

in exchange for the privilege of being registered at the doctor's home, where she sleeps in a corner. The main meal of the day is eaten in the late afternoon, and to keep him going through his long day at the Institute the doctor takes meat and coffee with his breakfast. Very late in the evening there will be supper, preferably when there is a guest in the home to share it. Should the doctor be alone at that time he will probably invite a neighbour or ring up a student or friend who lives nearby, but usually there is somebody there anxious to talk "shop" over the table.

Home life proceeds against a background of other people's telephone conversations, constantly interrupted by casual callers who drop in for consultations, to borrow books, to bring a piece of cake as a reward for a new receipt, to pass on good news. Scarcely a week passes without a visit from some former student passing through Moscow, bringing with him perhaps a goose, or a few bottles of Crimean wines, or a basket of grapes from the south. Even when they are celebrating a family festival, birthday or name-day or anniversary of some outstanding event in the family's progress from the village to its present status, the same cheerful and random spirit reigns. Guests bring their friends with them, the only stipulation being that they share the mood of the party and leave a phrase or an idea behind them that is worth remembering for its wisdom, aptness or just for its friendliness.

The habit of relying on other people's help and, in return, of giving help where possible is deeply ingrained in the Soviet nature as a result of education and experience. From the beginning of his day when he rises to take a cold shower-bath in the communal bathroom, the doctor is a member of a community tightly knit with mutual services. Whoever is up first of the users of the communal kitchen puts water on to boil for the rest. When he has finished with his newspapers the doctor pushes them under his neighbour's

door, and goes down to take his seat in the car which has previously called for two colleagues. In his diary there are always notes to remind him to lend money to somebody, to congratulate a colleague on his candidateship, to write to the newspapers about some abuse which has been called to his attention. Only by sharing the tasks of everyday life is it possible for people to devote so much of their time to their work. The Russians have no time to seek an individual solution of their material problems. They are too busy with things they consider more important.

Mrs. K. runs the financial side of the family life and all the money deriving from salaries, scholarships, fees and author's royalties finds its way to a drawer in her desk. The doctor's salary has been raised since the war to 6,500 roubles a month, of which after deduction of taxes and his contribution to the Reconstruction Loan, he receives 5,750 roubles. Until December, 1947, he also received a "limit-book" entitling the family to buy goods to the value of 10,000 roubles in six months at "government" prices at the shop to which it was attached. The service department of his institute also provided him with a food limit-book entitling the family to obtain food at rationed prices up to a limit of 3,000 roubles a month.

It was the possession of these privileges, which he lost when the ration system was abolished at the end of 1947, that put Dr. K. into the better-off category of Soviet society. The rouble's purchasing power varied according to the document with which it was supported. The 125 clothing coupons that a city worker got every six months entitled him to make certain purchases at a comparatively low price. A pair of shoes, for instance, requiring 50 coupons cost him about 120 roubles in the autumn of 1947. If however, he had bought them "commercially," that is without surrendering coupons, he would have paid about 900 roubles. In such circumstances wealth consists not in the amount of

money you possess but in the documents you hold making valid that money for purchases at "government" prices. In those days Dr. K.'s family was almost always short of money towards the end of the month because they had the opportunity of converting most of their income into goods at a reasonable price and, conditions being what they were, did not let the opportunity pass.

But with rationing over things are different. If the family requires something which would make too big a hole in the monthly salary, Mrs. K. sends something to be sold at a state commission shop, the channel through which a vast quantity of second-hand goods pass from hand to hand at prices determined by the government which takes 7% from the seller for its services. By using the local commission-shop recently, Mrs. K. converted an old clock into a new refrigerator. But there are also other ways of using goods for payment. The two youths who brought several sacks of potatoes by lorry one rainy October day from the family allotment received a couple of pairs of army boots.

A year of life without ration cards has brought about yet another of those transformations that are constantly defeating the attempt of the observer to depict the conditions of life in Russia. Though the number of retail outlets remains inadequate for the handling of food and manufactured goods, there has been a substantial improvement in trading methods. The State Commission for the Distribution of Labour being reluctant to divert industrial and technical schools for the distributive trades, Moscow's shops continue to be understaffed and in the interests of the shop assistants, shopping hours were reduced early in 1948. But during this first year of "open trading," customers noticed a new spirit in the shops, replacing the "take it or leave it" attitude of shopkeepers that had grown up during the war. Some shops began to deliver parcels at the home. It was a memorable occasion when, early one Sunday morning in

the winter of 1947-48, our household was awakened by the call of the baker's girl, offering us from her basket as much white bread as the average Moscow family had been accustomed to get in a month. To introduce what was described in the press as a spirit of healthy competition, encouragement was given to the Central Co-operative Union to re-open shops in the cities, and since the end of rationing its shops have been permitted to sell at prices below as well as above those in the state shops. Another measure taken with the intention of keeping the shop-keepers up to the mark has been the stimulation of consumer-control over tradesmen. The Trade Union movement has taken an active part in sending inspectors from its housewives' committees into shops, and its newspaper *Trud* frequently exposed cases of neglect or fraud. Gradually a sense of discrimination is returning to the consumers and although shopping under present conditions represents a great loss of time, the mood of the 1948 shopping crowd is different from that of last year, for it is made up of people who are after things they want and have selected, and who are no longer obliged to confine their purchases to the very narrow range offered them during the time of rationing.

The history of retail trade during the Soviet period is a curious one. For some time the idea was prevalent in Communist circles that trade was a somewhat unworthy occupation, even when it had become a public service. The mind of the nation was bent on production and the technique of distribution was neglected, with the result that for at least the first ten years of the Soviet regime the community as consumer had much to grumble about. In the early years of the 1930's things improved as the co-operative societies expanded their activities, but it was not long before the public was being victimized by corrupt practices in this, the most difficult field of social activity to control effectively. Co-operative retail trade was confined to the villages by

government decree and in its place shops were set up under the People's Commissariat of Trade, while in the factories newly-created supply departments served the requirements of their employees.

During the war these supply departments (O.R.S.) relying partly on the products of their own farms and improvised workshops, provided factory and office workers with a substantial proportion of the food and manufactured goods distributed. But as conditions improved, steps were taken to widen the opportunities of the purchaser. The co-operative movement was revived. Its stores began to re-open in the cities during 1946 and a spirit of competition, both in prices and service, was infused into retail trading. The state, however, while losing its monopoly, retained control over the majority of shops. Each republic has its Ministry of Trade directing the work of its control organisations at provincial, city and district levels. Each type of sales or distributive organisation is an individual entity with its own administration, and the Ministry of Trade can give its instructions at any level. Till 1948 there were two types of stores, one selling rationed, the other " commercial " supplies, in addition to consumer co-operative stores and stores of the O.R.S., all of them being subject to Ministry of Trade control to the extent that a substantial proportion of the goods they sold were received according to recommendations issuing from the Ministry. Allocations to each type of distributive agency are varied in quality and quantity, according to instructions given by the government. Thus after the raising of the siege of Leningrad a relatively large supply of goods was allocated to the city's trading organisations. Agricultural districts which have done well in meeting their obligations to the state are " rewarded " with an increase in the flow of cloth and other consumption goods to the local shops.

Private trade is not forbidden in the Soviet Union but it

is discouraged by economic sanctions. Most small traders therefore join co-operatives, organised in trade categories and often run by war-invalids. While the private trader gets no allocation from the Ministry of Trade, these small producer or trading co-operatives draw supplies at state-controlled prices.

There are no variations of retail selling prices between shops of the same category, with the single exception of co-operatives which are now allowed to sell certain kinds of goods, mainly foodstuffs at any price below that charged in the state-owned shops. Thus you have a situation, surprising at first to the foreigner, that all Moscow restaurants of the first category use an identical price-list, that goods bought in a tiny wooden kiosk on the outskirts of the city cost the same as in one of the marbled emporiums of the Gorky Street in central Moscow. The reason is the same as that which enables branded goods to be sold at fixed prices in capitalist countries, all channels of distribution, except the co-operatives which buy directly from the farms, receiving supplies at the same price, distribution costs being born by the supplier, in this case the State.

In such circumstances it is not surprising that in the post-war period the authorities should have been faced with the double problem of improving service in Soviet shops and protecting the public from a number of abuses, usually the result of shop-keepers trying to force the sale of unpopular goods by dubious means. Everyone who lived in Moscow after the war remember the kind of shop where the saleswoman enveloped in a grey shawl stands glumly in a dark corner while the public mills around the counter and show-cases. With dead-pan expression she leisurely attends to their enquiries, apparently as little interested in obtaining a sale as the flies that crawl over the oleograph portrait of the incongruously alert looking Mr. Mikoyan. Take it or leave it, is the attitude to salesmanship of such people,

whose morale has been spoiled by years of shortage. Such shops are still to be found, but happily the growth of discrimination on the part of the public coinciding with a greater variety of goods appearing in the shops, and a vigorous press campaign, have brought about a change. Several simple, but effective, means have been devised to stimulate keenness, including organising competitions for service between stores, and the paying of premiums to diligent shopkeepers and their assistants. Even the second-hand book sellers have their plan, I discovered, when the purchase of an encyclopaedia on the last day of the month brought an expression of blissful joy to the face of the young one-armed ex-soldier who served me.

The other side of the picture is revealed in the following two stories told in the Moscow newspapers. A customer entered a general store in Solnechnogorsk and asked for a saucepan. He was told that it would cost 27 roubles 50 copecks. The customer objected that the correct price for a saucepan was 20 roubles. To this the salesman agreed but informed him that in addition to the saucepan the customer would receive a pair of attractive gilt ear-rings. The customer objected.

Don't you see that I am a man ? I don't need ear-rings.—I am not interested who you are—replied the salesman angrily. But we do not sell saucepans separately, only together with ear-rings.

The other story is entitled The Compulsory Ashtray, and because it is typical of the cautionary-feuilleton method of Soviet journalism I will quote it in full.

Citizen Ivanov has recently become a collector of ash-trays ; all over his room are ash-trays, all exactly alike, bearing the trade mark of the Chusovoye industrial combine.

After the ash-trays Ivanov began to collect spoons. His sideboard drawer is full of them, all exactly alike and all with the same trade mark.

It all started with his losing a button from his jacket. When he went to buy another button, he found he had to buy an ash-tray. It was the same with the needle he had to buy the next day and every time he bought anything.

A similar situation exists in Minsk where customers in the city's store find that to buy a glass they also have to buy a salad dish. This soon led to an increase in the turnover of the Minsk shops and delighted the directors who thus got rid of poor quality goods. The customers, however, were far from delighted, although some thanked their lucky stars that it was salad dishes and not grand pianos that they were being forced to buy in addition to the goods they really wanted.

The patient customers still put up with these forced purchases, but it cannot be said that the directors of the Minsk store and his colleague in Chusovoye are giving good service to their customers. . . .

* * * * *

Living near to Dr. K. is the chief constructor of an important Moscow factory who because of his age has been permitted to organize his office at home. He occupies three rooms, his own office, a working room for his staff, and a bed-sitting room where he and his wife live. He rises at six o'clock, drinks two glasses of strong, very sweet, tepid tea, smokes a cigarette and looks through his note books to refresh his mind on the problems of the day. At six-thirty precisely he enters his office and works undisturbed until 9 o'clock when his staff arrives. With them he works until 1.30 when he takes his lunch. This is prepared by his wife, who in addition to her housework runs the children's creche and canteen at the works, a job she has done since she responded to Serge Orjonikidze's appeal fifteen years ago to

the wives of leading officials to occupy themselves with social work. The constructor eats twice a day and is fussy about his food. Even during the hardest days of the war when most of Moscow was living on beans cooked in flax-oil, his wife found enough white flour to provide him with a small piece of his favourite cake, which he invariably takes as the sweet course of a frugal meal. After lunch he works until midnight. He is seventy-eight years old.

During the war, the old man used to insist that after victory he would retire and when the director argued with him that he was irreplaceable, he would testily refer to his age and point to the little pile of guide books of various Black Sea and Caucasian resorts that he kept on his desk, close to the loudspeaker which from the first day of the war until Victory Day was never switched off, emitting a faint whisper except when, on hearing the Moscow call signal, the constructor turned it up to listen to the announcements of victories with a slight and almost malicious smile on his face. Then, when after the last echo of the guns had faded and the slow ponderous national anthem began he tuned it down again, he would pick up a pamphlet, gaze for a moment at a picture of Yalta or the hills at Gagri, and return to his work. But in 1948 he was still at his desk. The guide books are still there. The radio is switched off. On the wall where there used to be a map on which his secretary stuck little flags to mark the moves of the Red Army, there now hangs a graph indicating the factory's progress in fulfilment of the Five-Year Plan.

A number of large rooms in our house have been made into dormitories, each containing four to six beds with lock-up cupboards beside them. There is a common-room with newspapers, a few books and a couple of seedy palms, whose leaves one discovers on closer inspection, are made of green paper. A housekeeper who maintains a high standard of cleanliness provides glasses of tea on request. In one of

these dormitories there lives a young woman of 22 who has recently graduated from a technical school which she entered after demobilisation. She is now working as a turner in the fourth year of proficiency. Her home is near Kirov in the Kirzhak region of the Urals, a country where the soil yields little and grudgingly and where roads are rare. The room she shares with four other girls has a radio, is lit rather harshly by a ceiling lamp and contains separate wardrobes and a table. The girls take it in turns to buy flowers, pool most of their money and share their food, though their wages vary from 650 roubles a month to over 1,000. They pay no rent as the room is leased from the Moscow Soviet by their factory. Masha's work in the trade school and at the factory have taken up most of her time since the end of the war and it is on this and her future career as a worker that her interests are mainly centred. Strongly built, reserved, she looked the picture of health when I last saw her after two months' work at a Sovhoz, gathering potatoes and cabbages and getting her food from a peasant restaurant. She had been paid in full by the factory during this period and on returning to Moscow was given three days' holiday, which she spent in visiting the hairdresser, shopping, going to theatres and calling on relatives. Her one ambition is to study, for as she says, the one who knows more earns more and is more useful. She does not spend her money on books which she gets free from the district library, the oldest free library in Moscow, and it does not seem to worry her that she wears boots and the overcoat she was given by the trade-school. She goes in her working clothes to the best theatres in Moscow and comes back to the dormitory to chatter about the play. She writes home on lined copy-book paper which she folds into a triangular envelope and tells her village that she is enjoying herself, " as we all do in Moscow." She envies her neighbour who is studying while she works and tries to emulate her by fulfilling her plan of

work ahead of time, hoping in this way to qualify for the right to study. " Soon," she says, " there will be people coming to the factory to take my place and I want to go a step higher as we all do."

We took Masha a list of the current plays in Moscow so that she could choose before making the round of ticket-offices in the Metro stations. It was November 22nd, a Saturday like any other Saturday in the third year after the war finished and this was the list. At the six Academic theatres, the Bolshoi, the Maly, the Art and their affiliated theatres, two operas, Chaikovsky's *Onegin*, and Rimsky-Korakov's *May Night*, Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, Shaw's *Pygmalion*, and two new plays, Konstantin Simonov's *Days and Nights*, and Assanov's *The Diamonds*, were being presented. Of the rest, three plays were directly about the war, Fadeyev's *The Young Guard*, at the Vakhtangov Theatre, *Tanya* and *Great Days* at the Drama Theatre; the Mossoviet Theatre was giving Simonov's *The Russian Question*; the Satirical Theatre the first production of a play by the late Yevgeni Petrov about a wealthy Englishman who tried to run away from the war to a Pacific Isle; and the Dramatic Theatre, Tikhonov's *Beyond the River Kama* which deals with the theme of village schools in the post-war period. At the Kamerny Theatre Tairov's version of *Madame Bovary* was to be seen, at the Komsomol Theatre Ibsen's *Nora*. There were also performances at the Jewish and Gipsy theatres, a revival of Afinogenov's popular *Mashenka*, a ballet based on the story of Francesca da Rimini and several performances for children, at special theatres. The circus had a new programme which included a skit on a British general who was just then in the pillory. David Oistrakh was playing Mozart, Prokofiev and Chaikovsky concertos at the Conservatory.

Masha then decided to try for the opera and failing that for *The Young Guard*, which she had read as a novel.

Later we heard she had managed to buy a ticket for *Yevgieni Onegin* after queueing for an hour and a half in Theatre Square. She sat in a box in the second tier, paying 12 roubles for the seat, and she spent a further 4 on a chocolate eclair in the intermission.

It is doubtful whether Comrade Kostikov has been inside a theatre since the war was over, though he has only to ask to receive a ticket any time he wishes. Kostikov, who has a bed in another dormitory, is a Party worker. He is from Tula, of a family of metal workers. His life in the Party has taken him all over the Soviet Union, to Moscow for the course of higher party training, to Magnitogorsk, Sverdlovsk, Leningrad, Khabarovsk. Comfort means nothing whatever to him and he is quite indifferent whether he lives in a dormitory or in a home of his own. Such are his powers of concentration that he can continue writing his lectures and taking notes from political text books with the dormitory radio on full-blast and half a dozen people talking at once around him. Kostikov, it seems, only feels himself really at ease when he is in committee. People he remembers, not by their faces, but by the way they voted. He judges character according to a rigid criterion, is it useful to the Party cause or not ? One often feels that one would like to take Kostikov for a walk in a Moscow park, force him to sit down for half-an-hour, remove the copy of *Bolshevik* and his note book from his pocket, and persuade him to watch people. The curious thing is that Kostikov knows his faults and will sometimes talk about them.

" One day," he said to me while waiting for a long-distance telephone call, " One day I will put all that right." I had been quoting at him the famous passage in which Stalin compared Communists who lost touch with the people to Antaeus, vulnerable only when he was separated from the earth.

" It came to me during the war," he told me, " I was

wounded, you know. Had to lie up for over two months. Couldn't read, couldn't talk. Just thought. I thought about everything in the world, it seemed to me. I thought about the front, about our strength and what I knew about the Germans' strength. I thought about Moscow, blacked-out, hungry, cold. I thought about Stalin, about my parents, about people I had met. I thought about. . . .well, life, and death, and things like that. I'd never really had time to think that way before. Then one day they took the bandages from my eyes and I could see. And everything looked different to what it had been before. How can I put it ? More interesting and much more beautiful. It wasn't just that my eyes had been blind for two months. It seemed to me, that I, Kostikov, had been blind for thirty-seven years. Blind to just about one half of all that was going on around me. In Moscow, in the Far East, in the Urals. You say I work heartlessly, but you are wrong. You have no idea how much more everything means to me now, how much more deeply I believe in my work. But you are right when you say I ought to shut my eyes again and think. That's why I've volunteered to go to the collective-farms this year. To get away from the centre, from Moscow, for a while."

The call from Kursk came through and three days later Kostikov's place in the dormitory had been taken by another. He went to work as a political director at a Machine Tractor Station in one of the regions hardest hit by the 1946 drought.

Volodya, an electrician, who lost a leg in his first battle lives in a room 35 square metres large on the third floor of a side street in our district. He works a seven hour shift at the Moscow power station, and earns 1,400 roubles a month, on which he supports his wife and two children. She is a teacher's daughter, a few years older than he, and was a widow with one child when they married. Volodya receives a worker's ration card and a pension of 700 roubles

a month as a first category war invalid. At the end of 1947, the family, father, mother, children of 11 and 3, was drawing a daily bread ration of 1,900 grammes, and monthly, 2,200 grammes of sugar, 1,800 grammes of butter, margarine or cooking fat, 5,100 grammes of meat or fish, 5,700 grammes of macaroni, 100 grammes of tea, and 1,600 grammes of salt. In addition, Volodya received coupons for the following as compensation for not taking a mid-day meal at the works canteen; 2,200 grammes of meat or fish, 600 grammes of sugar, 800 grammes of butter, margarine or oil. Converted approximately to ounces per week the coupon value of the food cards of this typical Moscow worker's family of four, two and a half years after the war was: 30 lbs. of bread, 1 lb. 6 ounces of sugar, 1 lb. 3 ounces of butter, margarine or cooking fat, 3 lbs. 12 ounces of meat or fish, two pounds of macaroni, 13 ounces of salt, less than 1 ounce of tea.

All the fats allowance was available in butter during the autumn of 1947, and this family took its meat and fish in roughly equal quantitities. The total monthly cost of all food on the family cards in November, 1947, was about 650 roubles, made up of bread at 1.65 roubles a lb., butter at 29 roubles a lb., meat at about 13.40 roubles a lb., macaroni at 5.80 roubles a lb., and tea at 40 roubles a lb. (These consumption figures refer to the period when rationing was in force. Since the beginning of 1948 the only limits on purchases are what the shopper can afford).

This was not an unreasonably large proportion of Volodya's income—a little under a third—especially as he only pays 35 roubles a month rent, including the cost of central heating. The food received however, fell short of the family's needs and was supplemented in three ways, by the vegetables Volodya gets from the allotments worked collectively by his brigade, from purchases at the "co-op" and on the market, and from payment in kind for odd jobs done for his neighbours, who rely on him for running

repairs. Even so, it was a hard struggle to make both ends meet. In the autumn of 1947, prices in the co-operative stores were still three or four times dearer than in the "ration" shops. Admittedly, this was a substantial improvement on the spring when the effects of the 1946 drought caused the price of bread on the market to rise to 80 roubles a kilogramme (36 roubles a pound), of butter to 250 roubles a kilogramme (110 roubles a pound), and when the peasants were asking as much as 16 roubles a kilogramme (7 roubles a pound for potatoes) and 5 roubles each for eggs. All the same, Volodya's way of life is frugal, and he depends on his club for most of his recreation. Except on Sundays he is always to be seen in his working clothes. In the summer he sends the children to his brother, a worker who lives near Moscow in a home which is a combination of country cottage and suburban house, with a garden big enough for an orchard, and where there is room for a pig, a few geese and poultry. This tendency to combine town and country life is strong among the workers of Central Russia and the Urals. In the Ukraine and Southern Russia the change from the steppe village to urban conditions has been more abrupt. Around Moscow, Gorky, Ivanov, or on the verge of many cities of the Urals, the primitive Russian *izba* is gradually being transformed as electricity and water are introduced and inside walls are plastered. But the home-carved lintels and window frames remain and the land around the cottages is cultivated in a country way to provide food for the table and for relatives in the city. Many Russians have the opportunity of refreshing themselves by re-establishing those contacts with nature which modern industrial civilisation has so rudely severed.

As soon as the war ended the people of our district resumed their practice of moving into the periphery during the summer months. It has been estimated that about a million people leave Moscow annually to live in summer-*datchas* on

the outskirts. Long working hours, the requisitioning of many villages by the army, the reduction in trains, and the obligations on many Moscow citizens to take part in fire-fighting services reduced the daily flow of commuters sharply during the war, but by 1947 conditions were normal again, with beneficial results not only to the city dwellers but to the villagers who welcome the addition to their small budgets of the money received from letting rooms and selling local produce.

That year we used to go at weekends to a village near Moscow, where half a dozen cottages lie a few yards from the edge of one of the chain of lakes formed by the damming of the river Klyazma as part of the construction of the Moscow-Volga canal. Moscow is soon left behind as one enters the Green Belt by a concreted highway, for it is a city that is prevented by legislation from straggling into the country. From its edge to as far as working people can conveniently travel at the week-end, every foot of land is cultivated with painstaking care, and during the early summer men and women in factory clothes are out by the tens of thousands in ant-like activity in the fields. They come by lorry, forty or fifty of them, with spades over their shoulders, usually singing, and often these working parties are combined with mass picnics, the factory sending out food from the canteens and people bringing cameras with them. They leave Moscow before dawn and it is not uncommon for people to put in twelve hours work in the fields. Their reward comes in the form of the sacks of potatoes and cabbages which give to Moscow its characteristic odour in the late autumn. Just before reaching the lake the highway passes the former summer mansion of the Benckendorff family, now the seat of the regional administration. The glass-houses where once flowers and grapes were grown is a seed-testing laboratory working for the benefit of local farmers. After the war the Academy of

Architecture adopted the family chapel, restored it and put the family graves in order. It is now the village church cared for by an old priest and two nuns, who helped repair its bright blue dome with golden stars.

Larkin from whom we rented a room was a prisoner of war in Germany. Released by the Canadian army, repatriated from Denmark, he had to serve twelve months in a labour battalion after his return to Russia. In the meantime his wife had deserted him. At 36, returning to the village, he married a war-widow with four children under 10, whom he found living in great distress in a one-roomed cottage. Only the charity of neighbours and help from the local Soviet saved the family from starvation in the winter of 1946-47, at the end of which the appearance of the children was quite as bad as anything I had found in Western Germany a year previously. Larkin's first concern was to strengthen the house and dig the land around it. He spent the whole of the 1,500 roubles we paid him for three month's rent of a furnished room, to buy seed potatoes at 16 roubles a kilogramme. He re-roofed the cottage with oiled cardboard, nailed laths on the outside walls and coated them with a mixture of clay and binder in the Ukrainian manner. He got some planks from the local saw-mill in return for a week's work, and added a room. He put his army experience to good service by laying an electric cable to the cottage. Then he looked for a regular job and found one for himself as chief of the supply service at a brickworks across the lake and for his wife at the bakery, which meant extra bread for the home. Between them they now earn 1,050 roubles a month. They reckon to be able to get through the winter on the potatoes and cucumbers they grew, on the fish that is sometimes caught or dynamited in the lake, and on what comes on the ration. Larkin wears his army uniform without insignia, and holds his head high as he threads his way through the allotments to the little house he has built by the

lake for his wife and step-children. He has won the respect of the village by his display of guts and ingenuity.

Katrina Petrovna Fomina is at the age of 34 an engineer in a large Moscow factory, and I choose her as an example of a married working woman in contemporary Russia because her working-life began with the launching of the first Five-Year plan. Of medium height, strongly built, with a rather masculine profile, high forehead and large expressive grey eyes, she is married to a foreman who works in the same factory, and has two children, a boy and a girl attending elementary school.

Mrs. Fomina gets up at 7.30, breakfasts on bread and butter, tea with milk and a plate of buck-wheat porridge, and walks from her two-room apartment in a factory-owned block to clock-in at the works at 9. There she works an eight-hour day, six days a week, with a one-hour break for a lunch in the canteen which, at the end of 1948, was costing her from 7-9 roubles a day. Her pay was then 1,300 roubles a month after deduction of taxes, trade-union dues and insurance. With her husband's earnings, the family income was 3,000 roubles. On this the Fomina's maintained a modest standard of living. The housework and all the family sewing, mending and laundering was done by Katrina Petrovna's 54-year old mother, who lives with them and contributes to her keep by occasionally making frocks for the neighbours' children. In the evenings after work a meal of soup, potatoes and bottled tomatoes is eaten, and in 1948 Katrina Fomina was spending a good deal of money on fresh fruit. She is a non-smoker and the only time wine is drunk in the house is when some family occasion is being celebrated.

Mrs. Fomina usually spends her Sundays in embroidery and in making curtains and cushions for the home. Very occasionally she and her husband go to the theatre but their usual place of recreation is the factory club. Here they pay

only when some guest artist is performing. She generally goes to bed at midnight.

In summer-time she changes from her working clothes into printed frocks, in the winter she wears blue or black dresses with a woollen shawl. Only before going on vacation does she become really interested in her wardrobe, but if it is necessary to make some addition to it during the year she will generally work overtime for a spell, in order to earn the extra money. The department she works in counts on getting premiums for good work every few months and Mrs. Fomina has come to rely on these extra sums for most of the household expenditure other than food, which takes up most of the monthly income.

It is as a factory worker that she occupies the two rooms in which this family of five live, eat and entertain. They have the use of part of a vestibule for storage purposes, and of a bathroom shared with another family, but gas was laid on only in 1947, baths previously being taken at the public baths near the factory. Rent, electric light, heating and gas cost about 100 roubles a month. There is no garden but Mr. Fomina is a member of a group of workers who share an allotment. There is a children's park opposite the house.

" When I left school twenty years ago " Katrina Petrovna told me, " I went to work without qualifications in one of the work-shops of the factory, packing, scrubbing, and cleaning rust off metal parts. One day, at a workers' meeting in this region, which was quite countrified in those days, incidentally, I heard somebody from the Mossoviet talking about the projects for building new factories under the first Five-Year Plan. I joined a construction group. It was a difficult but wonderful time. We saw huge new buildings of steel, glass and concrete going up. We ate millet soup three times a day, no meat, and needed about twice as much bread as we eat now to keep us going. My

money was just enough to pay for my food. I had one blouse and skirt and used to have to wash my clothes in the evening to have something to wear the next day. In the winter the factory sports club gave us ski-suits, winter coats and boots. They weren't at all the kind of clothes a girl of sixteen likes to wear, I can tell you."

"I spent my first bonus on books, on a Christmas tree and on having a perm. I used to go to meetings regularly, also to the library, and I took the advice of our foreman who was always reading in his spare time and told me I ought to study. So while I went on building I learned how to drive a locomotive and was soon given the job of driving one that was used on the site to bring building materials from the main-line. I remember I had tooth-ache the first time I was in charge of an engine. Then I got a premium which was equivalent to three months' wages and gave me a chance of taking a course in engineering technique and of going on to the institute. I married, had a daughter, then a son, reached the position of foreman and now I am an engineer.

"Why should you be so specially interested in me?" Katrina Petrovna asked. "There's nothing different in my live from that of many others, though I dream of reaching a position when everybody will be proud of me. One must know how to do lots of things, I always say. I grew up with the factory, and somehow I think my life will always be connected with that of the factory's. I helped to build it, I learned everything I know there, I stayed with it when most of the machinery went to the Urals. We used to work 24-hour stretches then, in the winter of 1941, then sleep a day, because it was difficult to move to and fro in Moscow during the raids."

"It seems to me" said Katrina Petrovna, thoughtfully, "that most human beings will try to perfect themselves if they have a secure job and can study and when necessary,

rest free of charge. As long as there is peace and they know that what they are doing is for the sake of peace. Life is very hard for us, but it is bearable because its difficulties are being shared by all, and we all know that they can be overcome."

Not all Soviet working women, of course, devote themselves so single-mindedly to their professions. Nina Lasarieva, for example, a pretty blonde typist whose husband was killed in the war, leaving her with one child, only works because of the pressure of economic necessity. Her widow's pension pays for the rent of a two-room apartment and for the maintenance of her daughter; while her wages of 650 roubles a month all go in buying food. Her working conditions are not arduous. She shares an office, 6 x 5 metres with three other typists working for the Ministry of the Petroleum Industry. She is not allowed to work overtime because of her state of health. She was entitled to paid holidays after six months' employment, and stands fairly high in the list of priorities for vouchers for clothes, free theatre tickets and so on. Her hobby is playing billiards, but she devotes her day off to her child. Before her husband's death she did not work, spending most of the day in their well-furnished home and in the park nearby. She has a pleasant singing voice and used to take lessons. After the war she took a course in typing and had no difficulty in finding work. The Lasarievas' live frugally. Nina cooks on a Primus stove in a corner of the room, uses the public baths, and relies a good deal on parcels of food sent from her parents in the country. Her clothes are neat but worn and she longs for the time when prices will be down to the pre-war level. She lives quietly, commemorating the day her husband was killed by inviting a few family friends in to sit with her round the table and talk of happier days. There are many, many Ninas in Russia who with their youth only just behind them face life alone with their memories and for such

as these, work offers some measure of comfort, for Soviet work, even in an office, is presented to the worker as something that is socially important. He is made aware of the part, however humble, that he is playing in the concerted action against want and hunger. In spite of muddle, inefficiency and waste, the struggle is being won and the feeling of insecurity that is inseparable from poverty of the degree the Soviet Union was obliged to suffer after the war, is giving place to a new assurance that is lifting the hearts of those who live for their children.

What have they in common, this handful of Russians living in the third winter of peace, the poor widow and the Party worker, the ex-soldier rebuilding his lake-side cottage and the war-invalid, the village girl who has come to the city to learn a craft and the aged engineer postponing, for year after year, his retirement to the South, the working mother and the kind-hearted professor? And the other figures that have thronged the scenes described in this book, the demobilised soldiers struggling for their rights against harrassed bureauocrats, the Ukrainian farmers pledging their word to raise record crops, the zealous communists attending courses in dialectical materialism after a hard day's work in the factory, the writers diligently construing the ideological decrees of the Central Committee, the architects and builders of the new Moscow, the new Kiev, the new Smolensk? . . . .

If they share confidence in their government's ability to reshape the Soviet world, this is not to say that they are free from anxieties about the prospects of peace being preserved. If they accept the socialist system as *sine qua non* for their own land, they believe that for a long time, at least, capitalism and socialism will co-exist in the world and that the Soviet Union need not live in isolation from this other half of the world. They are highly curious about everything that is foreign but they are convinced that their

own nation has the resourcefulness and the talents to produce its own characteristic way of life, and if they draw something from abroad, it is transformed in their hands into something essentially Russian. Their lives are peculiarly free from class-envy, from class-ache, but this does not mean that they do not desire to improve their status in society. They respect strength of character, especially if it includes qualities of leadership, but have little sympathy for the non-conforming member of society in a land where dissent generally means non-co-operation and an eccentric, a rebel.

Perhaps of all that they share, the most noteworthy is their stubborn, impassioned, optimistic devotion to constructive labour. The inter-dependence of rights and duties of labour and its reward, has become axiomatic in their manner of thinking. To be idle, even to work badly, is an offence against the community. "Those who did not fulfill their plan of work were reluctant to come to the polls, they were ashamed" an observer at the 1947 elections reported. "I am already years ahead of my plan, and somehow I feel a lightness of soul," a worker once told me, describing his rapid advancement in the factory.

The almost fabulous enthusiasm in which the triumphs of the first and second Five Year Plans were fulfilled is less evident now, indeed is no longer encouraged; the word 'selfless' can no longer be applied to Soviet labour, for people have come to expect differential rewards for their toil. But the volunteer system is still widely applied especially when it is a question of calling on people to give up relatively comfortable homes for pioneer-work in the most forbidding circumstances. Of the two major pieces of evidence that the Soviet people are loyal to the regime—the willingness with which some 12 million men handed in their arms at the end of hostilities, and the continuation of the volunteer spirit in post-war conditions—the latter is probably the most convincing. The argument that the

Russian people are discontented with the way they are governed falls to the ground when one discovers how little the element of compulsion enters into the process by which hundreds of thousands of them have freely accepted temporary hardships in order to rebuild their land according to the principles laid down by the government, to live in dugouts in Stalingrad, to leave Moscow for work among the ruins of Zaporozhye and Sevastopol, to open up the ironfields of the Kola peninsula. . . .

There is one phrase that has been on everybody's lips since the war ended. " We are changing the world," the soldiers wrote from Central Europe. " We are changing the world " people told you when you asked them about what was happening in the Donbas or in Leningrad. " We are changing the world " commented the reader as he lifted his head from the newspaper with its stories of struggle on the land against the consequences of drought.

It is this feeling that their work has a mighty purpose, that on their skill and industriousness depends the happiness of more than those who live and will live in the Soviet Union, that gives to the Russian scene its liveliness, its fervour, its astonishing dynamism. In the rebuilding of their land, the Russians have concentrated all their revolutionary energy, their inventiveness, their love of their country, their humanism. And in this simple phrase " We are changing the world " are packed all their hopes or that their purposeful efforts will receive their reward, that the blood they have shed and the torments they have endured will not have been in vain and that their children will live in peace.

Chapter Eight

UNDERSTANDING THE RUSSIANS

MORE than once during the course of this book the reader may have asked himself what these developments in post-war Russia are leading to, what kind of future is portended by the post-war events described. Is it danger or safety for the Soviet people and for the rest of us? The world can obviously derive little satisfaction from the record of Soviet success in reconstruction if, when we come to break down the generalisation of output and force and wealth, we should discover a Russia preparing for war.

Now, it is clear that the Soviet Government does not consider its task confined to reconstruction and that its present short-term plans, to which all activities are keyed, are part of a general plan for the development of the nation's resources. Its activities continue to be tinged with what the Webbs 14 years ago described as its " fanatically held and all-over-ruling purpose of social and economic change." The current Five-Year Plan is thus one of the great strides which the nation is taking towards communism and the greater the distance that separates the Soviet people from the late war, the more widespread is the sense of moving towards something new, towards a society transformed not only in its general lines but in every detail of the individual's life.

For a country that has suffered so intensely, whose people have been so deeply bereaved, have so much to mourn, this

thrustful leadership to a new and better life provides the one certain consolation; the far-away echoes of bloody battles and the moaning of widows are smothered by the hymn of faith with which the nation advances to a future safeguarded from further catastrophes. The people cling with remarkable persistency to the belief that once the differences in the levels of productivity and prosperity between their land and those of the capitalist lands have been removed, their lives will be secure. That such an advance should in itself lessen the chances of preserving peace in the world, that a strong Soviet Union could be a menace to the security of any other land, such ideas are beyond the realms of belief, and their absence from the Russian mind is probably the most striking difference between the mood in which the people of the Soviet Union face the future and that in which the people of Hitler's Germany envisaged their destiny during that country's phase of industrial expansion.

The idea of change pervades the Soviet scene as the nation moves on its course not only from the ruins of war but from the whole of its unhappy past. Let the reader remind himself again and again of the condition of pre-revolutionary Russia, of the humiliating lives led by hired labourers and unskilled workers, of the depths of superstition into which three-quarters of the inhabitants of an area stretching from the Baltic to the Pacific, from the frontiers of India to the Arctic, had been deliberately kept by a corrupted church in league with the most reactionary elements in the state. And let him consider but a few of the principles that have been introduced and put into practice with unprecedented speed since the Revolution: the principle of universal education and the spreading of scientific knowledge, the principle of universal, free medical services and public hygiene, the principle of raising the material well-being and comfort of the greatest possible number of people, the principle of racial equality, all principles which we may

safely call democratic. Let the reader ask himself whether in an industrial age the concept of democracy should not include as it does in the Soviet Union an obligation on the government to provide its people with work, and an obligation on the citizen to work for his share of the common bounty; whether political democracy can be considered complete unless the citizen is drawn as he increasingly is in the Soviet Union, into participation at all levels into the government of his country and the regulation of public affairs?

There is much talk these days about "ways of life." We hear about the American way, and perhaps even more about the un-American way, of the British way, of a Western European tradition. We are called on to defend these generalities against an alien way of life no less vaguely defined. There was a time, when Russians were pouring out their blood in a cause they, at least, were proud to believe was a common cause, when men of authority were warning the free world against the danger of believing in the Bolshevist bogey. Today, when the Soviet Union is no longer bleeding, but, on the contrary is gaining strength and in the process contributing generously to the restoration of life in those areas where she is in the best position to help, other voices are heard, as men whose fears are as dangerous as their ambitions, take up the threads that Goebbels let drop as he died in the cellars under the Voss Strasse. Never was it more necessary for the world to discover whether there is, in distinction to this "bogey," a Soviet way of life worthy of its respect.

These ways of life and standards are really sets of values for the regulation of relations between man and society. They are rules of behaviour written into tradition and accepted well-nigh unquestioned by public opinion. Some are enshrined in law and constitutions. Others belong to what is called unwritten law. They form social morality.

They are not learned in school hours but in the nursery and the play-ground. They are not found in text books but in literature and in tales of the lives of great men. But when we try to define what we mean by a nation's way of life we at once run into a set of difficulties quite apart from those involved in the hopeless task of weighing imponderables. For even if we agree that certain standards exist, it is unlikely that we shall do so when we come to consider how far they are being lived up to and how permanent is the harm done to national traditions by a widespread deviation from it. For example, even if sometime ahead the American people should revolt against the standards arbitrarily forced on it by the commercial magnates of Hollywood and reject their tin-can version of civilization, can we be sure that the debasement of taste has not gone too far to be mended ? In other words, are Hollywood standards already a part of the traditional American way of life ? And is lynching ? And are the other forms of racial intolerance which the world has come to associate with America ?

Those who know America, and the best of the Americans, would certainly answer with a resounding " No," and the Russian people, who are made familiar with the humane progressive side of American life almost from the days they enter their kindergartens, would join them, for at no time, not even when they were at grips with the Germans, did the Russians fail to distinguish between " good " and " bad " forces at work within nations. In a similar way, it would be unjust to Britain to assume that the national tradition included a tolerance for the misery and mass unemployment that characterised so many of the years in the inter-war period although there is little doubt that the British worker's ' traditional ' respect for labour has been greatly changed by his experience of these conditions and that it will take a long time to convince them that security is to be found in factory-work in some of the older branches of industry.

No way of life, in short, can stand up to the damaging criticism of those who look for the black spots only and who attach an exaggerated importance to abnormal or transient features. And if there is considerable justification for the charge that the Russians have erred in this respect, stressing the racial intolerance and the Tammany Hall corruption of America, and Britain's neglect of her colonial peoples, the Russians can justly claim that they were not the first to start the mud-slinging. The disproportionate unfriendly and often biased comments on the Western world published in the Soviet Union since 1946 are but a straw in the scales compared with the mass of vile anti-Soviet writing that, with one brief interruption, has poured from the presses of the capitalist lands. While the Russians have always shown respect for genuinely progressive forces in other countries, their opponents have, by and large, dismissed everything that the Soviet Union has produced since its foundation as tainted and despicable, undervaluing its army when an alliance with that army could have saved the peace of the world ; as today they undervalue the greatness of the Soviet contribution to the rebuilding of that great area of Europe whose people took the Allies at their word and as soon as they were freed from the enemy set about rebuilding their lands in a socialist manner, and cultivating friendship with a Soviet Union they had, at heavy cost, neglected in the past.

If we are to discover the real Soviet Union we must look beyond the " black spots," beyond the grim days of collectivisation when Stalin, with a firm conviction that events in Germany contained the seeds of war, hastened a process that might in surer times have been allowed to take a less severe course. We must, too, look beyond the extraordinary measures taken to dispose of Russia's fifth-column and to secure the Red Army's defensive positions in the Western fringe. This is not to excuse the Soviet Govern-

ment for the way it acted, though there may be some who will judge that the blame lies not on Russian heads but on those of the Nazis who were preparing war and on those who abetted them. When a nation is faced with an emerging threat to its very existence—and Stalin was proved right by later events—the measures it takes for its security cannot be judged from the same view-point as those taken by a land which has deliberately set out on a course of aggression.

There is another Russia than that of the purges, the deportations, the secret police, and it is right that we should study this other Russia especially because there are many signs that as the Soviet Union consolidates its position in the framework of nations, the "black spots" lose their significance in the general picture.

There is the Russia that a people traditionally humane, individualistic and talented have shown that they love. There can be no getting away from the fact that in circumstances favourable for revolt, when so many millions held arms in their hands, when over a vast territory strewn with weapons the power of the authorities was scarcely felt, no organized opposition was raised against the Soviet regime. We cannot overlook the fact that it was not the most enlightened and educated elements in the population that fraternized with the German invader but the most venial, ignorant and criminal, that the Ukraine, wholly occupied, remained staunchly faithful to the Soviet regime, fighting to defend collectivization, and that it was the most backward, the least sovietised peoples, Crimean Tartars and Kalmuks, who met the enemy with bread and salt and fought in his ranks. And though the absence of opposition candidates in the three successive elections that have been held since the war makes nonsense of the argument that the results were evidence of the people's preference for the regime to any other, (since no other presented itself as a practicable possibility), it cannot be disguised that the Soviet people,

in secret ballot, passed virtually unanimous votes of confidence in their government. Let it be remembered, too, that it was during the period when the outlook was blackest for Russia that there was the greatest inflow of volunteers into the Communist Party in all its history, though each new member knew he was condemning himself to certain death were Russia to lose the war. Can it be doubted that the Soviet regime is popular?

When we seek the cause of this popularity we are, I think, well on the way to discovering of what the Soviet way of life consists. We shall find that the government has been given what may be described as a permanent mandate to change the existing order and that it has the support of the people so long as the belief persists that it is fulfilling this mandate with vigour, efficiency and foresight. Time was when those who realized the progress made formed a small minority of the population, but for at least ten years this knowledge has become the possession of the majority who as they advance in their various walks of life measure their progress by the standard of their own past or of that of their parents. The most devoted supporters of the regime are, naturally, those who are most aware of the benefits it has conferred on them: the scores of thousands of young people who come from village to city each year to learn crafts, and who find that the ladder of promotion before them is broad and easily mounted: the poor peasant who sees the government constantly vigilant in his interests against any recrudescence of the *kulak* spirit: the rank-and-file worker for whom the trade union movement speaks when through its vigorous hard-hitting press it raps the wrists of ministers and bureaucrats. To these the main compensation for present hardships is the conviction that change for the better is rapid and general. Perhaps something of the high spirit of adventure, of the breaking of new ground in the arts, of experiment in architecture and cinematography, has gone

from Soviet life; some of the government's measures such as the abandonment of co-education may seem to some a disappointing sequel to the days when Lunarcharsky was Commissar for Enlightenment; by aesthetic standards the painting and literature of today, so tremendously popular with the younger generations, have little to commend them in comparison with the creation of the 1920's. The lowering of levels is a natural result and, one may hope, of temporary duration, of the immense broadening of the educated public due to the widespread introduction of secondary education. The schoolroom is no place for sophistication and the Soviet Union today is pervaded with an atmosphere of the schoolroom where people who are studying for their examination are not likely to take kindly to teachers who appear to be trying deliberately to puzzle or tease their minds, and where those who have just passed are a little over-confident that they know everything.

The future of the Soviet Union lies in the hands of these younger generations whose influence in the administration and in policy-making is far greater than that which falls to youth in any other land. Even in its fourth decade, the country of the Soviets continues to call on its youth to shoulder responsibilities that elsewhere do not usually devolve on men till their middle-age. But this youthfulness is no longer the dominant feature of Soviet life. What matters more is that the new human forces that are coming forward represent a different class than has hitherto exercised power in the affairs of nations. We can never understand the character of life in the Soviet Union unless we bear in mind that its leaders are men of working-class origin and that the mainspring of their action is the sense of bold confidence deriving from their knowledge that they are pioneers. From this awareness of their unique position in the world may also come their determination to give capitalist forces in the world no opportunities to rob them of their successes.

To expect the Russian people to believe that countries where these forces are still dominant will go on regarding the consolidation of Soviet power with equanimity, is as unreasonable as to expect workers after a successful strike to trust their bosses. The Soviet Union will have to make considerably more progress in its ambitious programme to catch up with the productivity of the capitalist lands before, for its part, it can afford to ignore the thinly-veiled hostility of the exponents of capitalism for their socialist rival. For just as the average thinking man in U.S.S.R. today believes that the gains of his class stem from the Revolution, so is he convinced that counter-revolution would wipe out those gains, reducing Russia to colonial status, and robbing the working-class of its hard-won achievements. Only the narrowing of the gap in the respective standards of living of the Soviet Union and the United States can make the peace of the world more assured, and though he does not put it to himself quite in these terms, it is in the spirit of this belief that the working-class of Russia is today rebuilding its land.

Thus in assembling the elements of the Soviet way of life we must take first the principle, running like a red thread through all Soviet ways, that through labour lies peace.

It is to the working-class nature of the Soviet regime that is to be traced another important element in the Soviet way of life, the belief in the importance of collective decisions and with it the distrust of the single will. The collegial approach to the solution of current problems of administration, the time spent in thorough examination by committees of all important legislative questions, the search for a General Will more trustworthy than the will of any individual, these are fundamental to Soviet practice. From an early stage in their lives, the working-people of Russia receive practical experience of the strength that lies in co-operation,

of the danger to the common interest that a single dissenter may represent. Theirs is the morality of the factory workshop and of the trade union. There can be disagreement in discussion and debates may be long and acrimonious, but once the will of the majority has been determined, all must concur in it and be loyal to the majority decision, if the unity of the working-class is not to be broken. Hence the insistence of Russian leaders, big and small, on " loyalty," the continual watch for the " stab in the back." We shall find much more that resembles Russian methods in Western European trade union practice than in Western parliamentarianism, for the simple reason that in Soviet political life as in trade unionism it is the interests of a single class that are involved, with a resultant emphasis on unity, on the potential danger of minority groups. It is also worth remembering that Russia's history does not include that great struggle between the religious and temporal powers in which the spirit of freedom, in the Western sense, had its origin.

We must remind ourselves, too, that in Soviet elections and in the process of reaching decisions by majority vote at the countless meetings that make up the political life of the country, the questions at issue concern basic principles of the nation's life. No state can live, no society prosper unless its citizens are unanimous in their views on a certain number of basic values, unless there is general agreement on matters that affect the independence of the state and widespread respect for its political, social and economic order. Less than 30 years have passed since the Soviet Union was rent by civil war of the utmost savagery, an ' ideological war ' if ever there was one. Since then a whole new society has been taking shape. Every time the Soviet citizen is called on to vote he is, in fact, being asked whether he is for or against that society.

The nearest parallel that I can think of to make the situation in this field of Soviet activity clearer to the non-Russian

reader is the hypothetical case of a poll being held in, let us say, England on the issue of whether the national life was to continue to be based on the fundamental principles of Christianity. The alternative is not clearly defined and it is left to the electorate's imagination to picture the standards of government and the set of ethics that would follow a renunciation of all that is generally described as the Christian way of life. The organizers of the election include all who, by common consent, have most distinguished themselves as citizens in a Christian society, not necessarily active in the practice of religion but men and women whose lives and achievements are considered to have been a credit to the nation. The candidates are " the best men " of the nation, distinguished soldiers and sailors, public-spirited citizens, diligent workers, popular writers, talented inventors. No very definite programme is advanced. The electorate is asked whether it has confidence in the " British way of life " and in these carefully selected candidates as its best exponents. It is not a very hazardous undertaking to assume that in the event of such a poll being organised—organised moreover at a time when the electors believed that their way of life was imperilled by dangers that had been recently beaten back at fearful cost—the minority voting against would be a remarkably small one.

It is on such broad issues as this that the Soviet peoples' opinion is sought at elections and meetings. It would be idle to pretend that the outcome is not influenced, for this would be to ignore the role of the Communist Party whose leading position in the U.S.S.R. is recognized in the Constitution, where it is described as being made up of the most active and politically most conscious citizens. While the Party's task remains that of guiding the state—and it is intended that it shall so remain at least during the present period of rapid change when new forms of social organization are being shaped in a swiftly developing environment—all

important decisions will be taken under Party influence. It does not, however, follow from this that there is not a genuine attempt by the Party to meet the desires of the non-party element of society, or that the gap between Party and non-party is widening. On the contrary the past decade has been marked by developments—hastened by the war—that have narrowed this gap and caused a much closer approximation between Party interests and what might be called the general interest to be achieved than could be the case when it was the Party's task to hasten the mass of the people along strange untravelled ways. It would only be possible to talk of a conflict between Party and general interests if it could be established that the Communist Party was motivated by a lust for power, was acting with the interest of maintaining itself in a privileged position.

Soviet conditions suggest that such is not the case. Membership of the Communist Party brings with it no privileges to compensate for the greatly increased responsibilities that fall on its members. The great majority of its six and a half million members work on the farm and at the bench under exactly the same conditions as non-party members of society. They are expected to persuade, not to command, to set examples by their own work, to bring home to their fellow-workers the importance of the tasks set by the government. During the whole of the seven years I have spent in Russia, I have never heard it suggested that Party leaders abuse their power to provide themselves with extravagant comforts. Not a breath of scandal is breathed about the private lives of the rulers of Russia. How different was the case in Nazi Germany, where, in a single-party system, the rulers led lives of wild extravagance and pomp, outraging the public with their expenditure on mansions and mistresses !

In spite of the Communist Party's role as guide and teacher, in spite of the amount of state direction, the volunteer spirit is strong in contemporary Russia and forms an

important element in the Soviet way of life. There is a constant appeal to the public spirit of the ordinary citizen, and most of the splendid achievements in the reconstruction of the Soviet Union, the rebuilding of Stalingrad, the repair of the Moscow-Leningrad railway, the digging of the Feghana Canal in Central Asia, to name but a few, owe their accomplishment to the devoted spirit in which volunteers have come forward. This is, indeed, a queer kind of " totalitarian regime " which depends for its success so much on the voluntary efforts of its citizens !

We should not be surprised to find that in this working-class state there is a respect for labour quite unlike that found anywhere else in the world. In the Soviet Union, industrial achievements evoke real interest in the public ; they hit the headlines, they are the occasion for the same sort of excitement that grips the people of other lands when one of its number breaks a world speed record or carries out a daring feat of exploration.

With it, there goes a respect for science that must be considered as one of the outstanding features of the Soviet mind. The Russians were quick to realize that fascism found no readier supporters than among those who, ignorant or powerless, reject the scientific explanation of their world and readily swallowed its racial theories, its scientifically indefensible Fuehrer-prinzip ; and one of the first measures in the ideological field taken after the war was a resumption of scientific education in areas that had been occupied by the enemy. Anti-semitism, and chauvinism were met by a deliberate educational programme. Many countries where for one reason or another anti-semitism, incipient fascism, and colour prejudice have tended to revive since the end of the war might do well to take a page from the Soviet book and attack these shaming blotches on national life through their educational systems.

There is a clue to Soviet ways in the manner in which the

State has taken active measures to counteract the moral consequences of the war. We have seen, earlier in this book, how those who are in the best position to shape the Soviet mind, the writers and the school-teachers, have been called on to draw the portrait of the Soviet hero, a romantically idealized figure personifying all the civic virtues. This is no invitation to sanctimoniousness; rather, a summons to struggle. All Soviet life is tinged with a sense of this struggle between the community as a whole and its heritage from the past, between the individual and those weaknesses in his character which form a blemish on the ideal Soviet man. As society fights official greed and corruption, and those tendencies to dogmatic rigidity to which Russian bureaucracy is traditionally prone, the individual is urged to banish from his nature indolence, fatalism, laziness, prejudice, and to give rein to other characteristics that have for long been no less a part of the Russian nature, though often a submerged part. Of them, perhaps it is on his curiosity, his thirst for knowledge and his perseverence that the accent lies most heavily in our times, when Soviet society is moving from youth to maturity. We know of old this unusual curiosity, this minuteness of observation, this search for useful information that has marked the character of the individual Russian met in the pages of history books and memoirs. Today these characteristics have taken an important place in the concourse of forces that make up the collective Soviet mind. We know, too, of Russian perseverence, on which probably the best words were written 50 years ago by the Polish historian Waliszewski:

> "Perseverence, obstinate determination to reach the goal, even when that seemed utterly impossible—never to swerve from the path once chosen, however dangerous, never to change adopted measures, though they be defective, simply to double and treble effort, panting, like

> some wearied wood-cutter, to multiply blows and await their result, resolutely, patiently, stoically—this is the secret hidden in the Russian soul, tempered to adamantine hardness by extremes of slavery and centuries of redeeming toil."

The goal is a different one, the path more dangerous, but the spirit of perseverance remains.

He is not easy to govern, this Soviet citizen of our times, and he will not be an easy partner to get on with in the world, so convinced is he that every measure taken by his government should be directed to improving his condition, so sure that his kind of state is superior to all others. His success makes him feel independent, his expectations, impatient. He expects to be reasoned with, not commanded. He has become accustomed to feel himself free from petty restrictions on his liberty, and is no respecter of persons. He welcomes the speed with which his life is changing, for he believes that the Soviet system has within itself the capacity to reform its methods. Gradually he has become aware that in collective farm and trade union practice are planted the seeds of political democracy promising him fuller opportunities for influencing the acts of his government. He has noticed how the gap between deeds and ideals has narrowed since the Stalin Constitution was introduced, and has become consequently more vigilant of his rights.

He is brought up to consider himself the heir of all that is humane and progressive in European civilization and there is no land in the world where the working people are so responsive to the voices of the great European humanists, where there are such effective counter-forces at work against the meretricious standards which are being hawked about the world today, against the pessimism and mysticism and pseudo-science that are bewildering the masses of Western Europe and America. Perhaps there is something a little

sanctimonious in the way that he rejects the ideals of America's tin-can civilization, something priggish in his earnest respect for decent standards of human behaviour, but these are not attitudes that threaten the peace or welfare of the world. Indeed, the Russian feels that in his vigour, his faith in the dignity of man, his determination to shape his own future, he is setting an example to the world.

THE SOVIET BIOLOGY CONTROVERSY

The struggle between two conceptions of selection and vegetable amelioration which reached its concluding stage in the historic meeting of the Lenin Academy of Agricultural Science in the summer of 1948, had been in progress for some twenty years. Lysenko's report on the situation of biology in the Soviet Union, delivered to a gathering that included representatives of the State Planning Commission, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Academy of Sciences and the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U., marked the defeat of ideas that in heredity, in the transmission of acquired characteristics and in the evolution and transformation of man, constitute the foundations of the Hitlerite doctrine of racism. Lysenko, in a speech that combined fact and theory, dismissed as dangerous obscurantism the belief that the transmission and modification of hereditary character was effected by a substance, in the scholastic sense of the word, residing in the chromosomes which was kept without communication with the other cells of the organism, and which could not be influenced scientifically by cross-breeding hybridisation, or the grafting process. It was left to another speaker to point out that this theory led directly to the Hitlerite doctrine of " pure races," of certain " lines " of master-men, of " Jewish blood " etc.

Lysenko maintained that the living organism is a unity in which all the component parts interact mutually on each other. " The organism and the conditions necessary for its existence are a unity," he stated, with Michurin, carrying his theory forward to the statement that human intervention makes it possible to force any animal or plant to change more quickly and in a direction desirable to man. But,

Lysenko insisted, this intervention should not take the form of manipulation of chromosomes, which was the method used by the school of scientists he was opposing, and he called on a number of experts working in the practical field, agronomists, cattle-breeders, farmers, to support his thesis with facts drawn from their own experience. An official of the State Planning Commission intervened with devastating effect to state that most of the measures taken on the advice of the chromosome-manipulation school had led to failure. He blamed the neglect of soil amelioration on this school, since, as he maintained, it had denied its effect on culture.

Had the questions at issue been of a purely academic nature, the dispute might have been allowed to drag on. But in the Soviet Union scientists bear responsibility for the practical application of their research. On the decisions taken at this assembly depended the future of the Soviet Union's rural economy. What was being decided was to whom the state was to entrust the task of creating new plants, cattle, seeds in the whole sphere of planned agriculture. A mistake might have proved fatal. It is more than absurd to imagine that the great gathering, assembled to hear Lysenko and decide whether to endorse or reject his ideas, took any hasty or irresponsible decision, for the majority of them were men and women on whom the responsibility of the practical application of these ideas lay. However repugnant to minds trained in a materialist sense were the theories of the complete autonomy of a hereditary substance acting as mysteriously and unpredictably as the Holy Spirit, it is safe to assume that the support given to Lysenko was largely the result of the tangible proof he was able to provide to uphold his theory.